PAST & PRESENT

a journal of scientific history

AN INTERPRETATION OF CHINESE ECONOMIC HISTORY
Professor Wu Ta-k'un

THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY
Professor A. H. M. Jones

CAPITALISM—WHAT'S IN A NAME ?
R. H. Hilton

EVANGELICALISM AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION
V. Kiernan

THE MACHINE BREAKERS
E. J. Hobsbawn

THEODOR MOMMSEN'S LAST WISHES
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Introduction

NEW HISTORICAL PERIODICALS TEND TO DISCLAIM CONTROVERSIAL VIEWS about their subject. PAST AND PRESENT cannot do so. This journal has come into being, not so much because its founders think that there is room for more periodicals in which serious historical work in non-technical language may be published, but because there is room for concern about the state of historical research and discussion at present. The first issue is perhaps a suitable place for the editors to explain what the journal is trying to do. However, in future issues it will do it, in the tradition of the late Marc Bloch and his associate, Lucien Febvre, ' not by means of methodological articles and theoretical dissertations, but by example and fact.'

What kind of historical writing do we wish to encourage? The matter has been well put by the great Arab scholar Ibn Khaldun in the fourteenth century, a period which fortunately acquits him of twentieth-century parti-pris. ' History ' he writes (Prolegomena I, 56)

> is the record of human society, or world civilisation ; of the changes that take place in the nature of that society . . . ; of revolutions and uprisings by one set of people against another, with the resulting kingdoms and states with their various ranks ; of the different activities and occupations of men, whether for gaining their livelihood or in various sciences and crafts ; and in general, of all the transformations that society undergoes by its very nature.

Our main task, most of us would agree, is to record and explain these ' transformations that society undergoes by its very nature.' Such a study cannot but prompt some general conclusions, whether or not we call them ' laws of historical development ' — though we shall be poor historians if we underrate their complexity. Men are active and conscious makers of history, not merely its passive victims and indices. Each form of human society, and each individual phase therein, has its own special laws of development. Consequently we believe that fashionable attempts to express history in terms of the much simpler changes in the natural sciences (for instance in terms of biological evolution, statistical growth-curves or invariant psychological mechanisms) oversimplify and falsify it. Nor can it be explained merely as a function of outside environment — for instance climate, geography, or, more fashionably, culture-contact. We distrust attempts to explain one phase of history in terms primarily applicable to another — for instance Roman economy in terms of modern capitalism or imperialism, thirteenth-century cathedral-building in terms of Keynesian economic policies, let alone the

grosser anachronisms of journalists and political platform-speakers. One need not deny that such theories may throw some light on limited aspects of the subject; but they must be severely kept in their very modest place, and at present they are not.

The main danger of this oversimplification no longer comes, as it did in nineteenth-century, from the misapplication of narrowly mechanical views of the physical sciences, or of biological evolution. It comes rather from the vogue of certain ideas drawn from academic anthropology, sociology, psychology and economics, themselves sciences considerably less advanced than Victorian physics or biology, and much more directly charged with politics. The 'structural-functional approach, as developed in contemporary sociology' has been used, for example, to interpret French history since 1789. The work of economic statisticians and econometricians is recommended to us as the foundation for a new positivism entirely concerned with 'determinismes historiques.' 'Status systems' and 'psychological maladjustments' are used to interpret nations. The economic history of the past century and a half is divided into periods of 'empirical,' 'informed,' and 'cognitive entrepreneurship,' following a fashion to which an entire transatlantic research centre has now been dedicated. Whatever the merits of such ideas and methods — and some are no doubt stimulating, — they are unable to deal with any but the simplest forms of historical change. They are indeed misleading precisely because they hide behind a much greater degree of technical sophistication than Buckle or Comte possessed.

All these methods, however, share the belief that history may be rationally studied, and some of them, though over-simple, have in their time made important contributions to historical understanding. Moreover, it is important to observe, this rationalism is the preserve of no creed or party. The present generation, however, has seen the recrudesence of certain schools of thought, descended directly or indirectly from the anti-rational *Weltanschauung* of early nineteenth-century Romanticism, which deny the very possibility of a rational and scientific approach to history. Such views we find difficult to share. That does not mean, of course, that we deny the existence or the influence of irrational forces in the making of the past, nor that we suppose that the past is susceptible of explanation by means of a simple chain of causality. We are as aware as any other historians of the immense force of prejudice and passion in all their manifestations, religious, social and political; we do not deny the impact of the unique, the accidental or the fortuitous, and we are prepared, with the great historian and founder of the modern school of art-history, Max Dvorak, to consider the process of historical change not as the tracing of a single unbroken line of development, but rather as a complex development establishing at every stage new

conditions of creative activity and releasing at all stages new shoots from which new developments unfold. But these considerations, we believe, do not invalidate the scientific approach and the application of the scientific technique which nineteenth-century historical scholarship built up to our lasting advantage. We have no sympathy with superficial rationalisations; by the same token we have no sympathy with those for whom the irrational or the providential is the only thing of consequence in their conception of the past. The view of H. A. L. Fisher that history is merely one damned thing after another is, in our belief, unwarrantable. We dissent from it even when presented, by Benedetto Croce and his disciples, in the more sophisticated dress of philosophical idealism. To believe with these writers and others that the pattern we find in the past is merely the subjective one we put into it from the present, is, in effect, to deny that it can be scientific in any real sense. It is no more true, and certainly a great deal more dangerous, than the old view, long since outmoded, that it is possible for the historian — and, indeed, is his sole legitimate function — to establish by a laborious accumulation of 'fact,' a photographically exact reconstruction of an 'objective' past. Neither of these extremes, we believe, reflects accurately the possibilities of history and the functions of the historian. We believe that the methods of reason and science are at least as applicable to history as to geology, palaeontology, ecology or meteorology, though the process of change among humans is immensely more complex. Like these disciplines, history cannot logically separate the study of the past from the present and the future, for it deals with objective phenomena, which do not stop changing when we stop observing them.

Lastly, we agree with Polybius (XII, 25b) that

> the property of history is, first, to ascertain what was actually said (or done) and, second, to discover the causes of success or failure. The facts by themselves may be interesting, but hardly useful. It is the study of causes which makes history fruitful.
>
> When our minds transfer to present occasions similar conditions from the past, we acquire a basis for estimating the future . . . and are helped to face coming events with confidence.

We should perhaps to-day rely, not on discovering past parallels, but on understanding how change took place in the past; but we share the belief of Polybius in the value of history for the present, and in particular his conception of historical discipline as an instrument enabling us 'to face coming events with confidence.' In a generation which, as Friedrich Meinecke demonstrated, has history in its marrow, and for which an historical mode of thought is second nature, we believe that it is to history that the great majority of thinking men and women look for strength and understanding. It is to them that we address ourselves.

Within these general limits there is plenty of room for difference and disagreement. The Board, and contributors to PAST AND PRESENT study different periods and aspects of history, inherit different preconceptions, and hold differing views. The Editorial Board therefore takes no responsibility for the views of contributors, nor does it seek to impose its own on them, where it is united, nor to exclude contributions which are at odds with some or all its members. We shall, of course, apply certain technical criteria. Articles which merely bring the results of a piece of detailed research whose interest is narrowly restricted will not normally be published; nor, on the other hand, those which deal with wider historical problems without a firm foundation of scholarly research. We shall of course encourage contributions on historical questions which seem to us to be important — but with the object of discovering rather than of confirming the answers. We shall make a consistent attempt to widen the somewhat narrow horizon of traditional historical studies among the English-speaking public. The serious student in the mid-twentieth-century can no longer rest content in ignorance of the history and the historical thought of the greater part of the world. PAST AND PRESENT therefore will make special efforts to bring to non-specialist readers knowledge of Indian, Chinese, Arab, African or Latin-American history, and to make available the work of historians writing in unfamiliar languages, aided by advisers and collaborators from France, China, Italy, India, Czechoslovakia and many other countries.

PAST AND PRESENT will appear, for the time being, twice a year. It will publish articles, review articles and shorter communications on topics of interest to historians — whether specialists or not.

THE EDITORS.

An Interpretation of Chinese Economic History

Wu Ta-k'un

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE ECONOMY MAY BE CONVENIENTLY divided into three main stages. The first runs to the great turning point of the Ch'in dynasty, in 221 B.C., and the second from then to the coming of the foreigner in the mid-nineteenth-century. Within these two thousand years two lesser epochs may be discerned, separated by the establishment of the Sui Empire in 580 A.D. The third main period is the century of modern China, from 1840 to 1949. The establishment of the present government is likely to mark the beginning of an entirely new fourth period in Chinese history.

Limitations of space necessarily restrict the present article to a discussion of the first two main periods, before 1840. The problems of modern China must be relegated to separate treatment in a further article.

I

Our knowledge of the early history of China is still far from complete, and will not be much advanced until more archæological excavations have taken place. We cannot yet suggest any significant date for the transition in China from Palæolithic to Neolithic economy, nor for that from Neolithic to Bronze. But the excavations at Anyang[1] have established that under the Shang (or Yin) dynasty (1450-1050 B.C.) a mature and advanced technique of craftsmanship in bronze was already developed. The use of iron, however, developed late in China and was certainly not common before the period of the Warring States (481-256 B.C.).[2] Under both the Shang and the Western Chou (1050-772 B.C.) dynasties we may therefore say that Bronze Age civilisations continued. The main difference, however, between the Chinese Bronze Age and that of Egypt and Mesopotamia is that while there is in Egypt but one river and in Mesopotamia only two, the two great river valleys of China, the Yellow River and the Yangtse, are both fed by numerous tributaries, each as fertile as the Nile, Euphrates and Tigris. While the number of states which grew up in Egypt and Mesopotamia was fewer, the Chinese rivers supported simultaneously many hundreds of separate communites. These settlements are most fitly described as tribal states ; they were states, since they contained a sharp class

differentiation, governed by a highly organised ruling class developed from the tribal chieftains ; they were tribal in that the essence of the community was a blood relationship of people, and not a relationship to a territorial area or a system of landholding. Individually these states have much in common with the cities of the ancient Near East. But in China their numbers were far greater.

The number of these separate tribal states in China necessitated a long period of development before a single unified territorial state could emerge. When we speak of the time of the Shang and Western Chou states, we mean the periods when these two states successively exercised a loose hegemony over their neighbours. There was, however, one important difference between them. When the Chou state overthew the hegemony of the Shang state about 1050 B.C., it established the system known as *Feng-chien*. The Chou rulers parcelled out blocs of conquered territory to relatives of the royal family, and of allies who had aided them. A group of states was thus established, whose rulers for the most part belonged to the same kinship groups as the paramount state, to act as garrisons among the subject peoples, and guards against the proto-Turkish nomads. This system has little in common with European feudalism ; unfortunately, a time-honoured tradition translates '*Feng-chien*' into English as ' feudalism,' and, worse still, renders feudalism into Chinese as '*Feng-chien*.' Most western and Chinese scholars have therefore misunderstood the nature of the Chou state, and dubbed it ' feudal.'[3] The *Feng-chien* system was not feudal because of the social and economic system on which it rested. Up to the fall of the Chou dynasty, all land was still the property of the tribal states ; the main producers were peasants and artisans, slave and free-born, but in any case subject to all manner of legal and customary restrictions on their freedom. The slaves, however, like the land, belonged to the state and not to individuals ; and neither slaves nor land could be bought and sold, while the amount of land which any one family might till was strictly limited. The village commune was still a group of kindred families, and the relationship between the peasant and the lord was still a personal one, between an alien or distant ruler and a close-knit kinship group of peasants, not yet a relationship based on a system of landholding. There is no evidence to suggest that the migration of individuals or of individual families normally suggested itself to members of the kinship group as a possible escape from their subjection until the sustem was already disintegrating ; the legal compulsion on the peasant to remain on his native soil, the characteristic feature of European serfdom, did not therefore arise.

The village commune, the basic productive unit of this early society, was organised on the principal known as the " well-field " (*Ching-t'ien*). Its precise nature is obscure and controversial. It is first described by Mencius, in the period of the Warring States (481-256 B.C.), when it was already disappearing.[4] Mencius depicts

a commune as a group of eight related families, each tilling 100 Chinese acres for the payment of the commune's taxation to the central government. The description is schematic and idealised, and some scholars have doubted the existence of the system. Many modern Chinese scholars, however, are inclined to regard it as a highly stylised abstraction of a system whose essentials it preserves. There is little serious doubt that land was then still owned by the commune, and not by individuals or families ; and that no privileged class existed within the commune, though the elders decided minor internal questions of justice, and the peasants' labour supported the village craftsmen.

In their external relationships, groups of communes were ruled by ' nobles ' (*Kwei-tsu*), appointed in various grades by the ruler of the ruling city or state to govern greater or smaller numbers of communes. Government had three main functions ; the exaction of tribute, both in kind and in corvee labour ; the conscription of the peasantry into an army whenever the central government required one ; and the administration of criminal justice. In their original appointment, each noble of whatever grade was directly subordinate to the emperor ; in practice, the lesser grades became subject to the greater. When authentic records first begin to appear, in the period of the West Chou and the Warring States (1050-256 B.C.), the nobility had already entrusted the burden of detailed government to a class of administrators called *Shih* (clerks), whose remuneration was drawn from the tribute they collected, and often from the tribute of a particular commune or communes. Since the duties of the *Shih* included the conscription of peasants into the armies, they sometimes figured in disturbed periods as warriors, and came to form a separate social class intermediate between the nobility and the peasantry.

The form of government based on this system was of course despotic ; it was despotic because it was a bronze-using civilisation, and the costly copper and tin, the only known metals, were a monopoly of the rulers. Its despotic character was accentuated by the development of artificial irrigation works, whose maintenance played a great part in the stability of any government. They cannot however, be regarded as the *fons et origo* of despotism, since there is no evidence to suggest that any such works existed prior to the Chou dynasties. Even then, they differed from the irrigation works of the Near East. The rainfall of China is in most areas plentiful, and the arable areas of the river valleys much more extensive. The ancient oracle bone inscriptions are full of references to rain and water, but have no words for canals or dykes, which were first constructed on any scale in the period of the Warring States (481-256 B.C.), when China was already passing into the Iron Age, long after the despotic state was firmly established. It is important to keep the role of irrigation in proper perspective, since an exaggerated emphasis on artificial irrigation underlies the theories of Dr. K. A. Wittfogel,[5] which at

present enjoy a considerable prestige in the United States, and may easily mislead students more familar with Near Eastern than Chinese geography and climate.

This kind of economy tallies well with the so-called ' Oriental,' or ' Asiatic,' mode of production.[6] But it did not outlive the Chou dynasty, and cannot be held to characterise later periods of Chinese history. It did not survive because in the last centuries of the Chou dynasty, the period of the Warring States,[7] iron began to come into use. The use of metal spread considerably. Better agricultural implements, including the animal-drawn plough, were invented. The economic centre of China was then in the north, the wheat-growing area. The invention of the animal-drawn plough extended cultivation, increased the crop yield, and so increased the population ; new areas were brought under tillage, migration from one region to another became common, and trade developed. Metal currency, in small copper coins, first minted in 524 B.C.,[8] became popular, and a wealthy merchant and usurer class took shape. Mercantile capital began to disintegrate the tribal state and the village commune, for they stood in the way of the new technical advances. A new economy and a new political system became necessary.

II

The change which followed was the most momentous in Chinese economy before the nineteenth-century, and, indeed, the only major turning point. It first took place in the state of Ch'in (mainly in the modern Shensi province). In or about 350 B.C.[9] the king of Ch'in put into effect the policies advocated by his minister Shang Yang, and abolished the old *Ching-t'ien*, or village commune, system. Henceforth, restrictions on the sale of land and slaves were abolished ; private ownership of both was legally established. The change, known to Chinese historians as the ' Reform of Shang Yang,'[10] greatly increased the economic productivity of Ch'in ; the land supported more people, immigration was encouraged, the military strength of the state was much augmented, and in the long run Ch'in subdued the surrounding states and gave its name to the whole country.

Thus, in 221 B.C., the first real Chinese empire was founded. Ch'in Shih Huang Ti, the first emperor of Ch'in, no longer needed to surround his own state with dependent garrison colonies drawn from men of his own kin. He abolished the old *Feng-chien* system, and divided his empire into commanderies (*Chun*) and districts administered by local officials, appointed directly by the emperor. The nobles retained rank and honour, but they no longer dominated the government. The new officials were called ' *Kuan-liao*,' somewhat unhappily rendered in English by the word ' bureaucrat.' These ' bureaucrats ' were a development of the administrative

' *Shih* ' of the old days. Henceforth, they were accorded official rank and status. Entry to the grade was conditioned by literacy; in the time of the Han dynasty (206 B.C. - 220 A.D.) the germ of a state examination system came into existence, to attain its full development under the T'ang (618-906 A.D.). The great majority of the sons of landowners went to state schools, and qualified at the state examinations, reinforced by a small number of peasants' sons. When qualified they were eligible for appointment as officials (*Kuan-liao*). The officials or bureaucrats were usually not permitted to serve in their own district, lest their strong ties of kinship should embarrass them in the punishment of their relatives. All bureaucrats were *Shen-shih*, (usually englished as ' gentry ' or ' scholar-gentry '), though the ' gentry ' included candidates for the examinations and retired officials, as well as many graduates who never became ' bureaucrats,' and in common usage meant the ' gentry ' in their native areas, while the ' bureaucrat ' was usually a foreigner. ' Bureaucrats,' ' Gentry ' and ' Nobles ' together formed a single ruling class of ' powerful landowners ' (*Tu-hao*); called by differing names and exercising different degrees of influence under successive dynasties, this class remained unchanged in its essential structure until the nineteenth-century. Until the time of the T'ang (seventh- to ninth-centuries A.D.) the hereditary nobility of birth exercised the greatest weight within the ruling class; thereafter the ' bureaucrats ' and ' gentry ' families predominated, though many significant shifts of status in detail occurred in the ensuing centuries. But, under all dynasties, no matter how the different social and political groupings varied in social status, in political influence and in economic strength, two things are common to them all. They drew their main income from land; and they enjoyed the special privilege of paying either no tax, or tax at a very low rate. In the actual practice of administration, the different categories of the ruling class were interdependent. The bureaucrat could not govern a strange district without the co-operation of the local ' gentry '; he himself came from the same social class and in old age would return to them, while the ' gentry ' knew that they or their sons would serve as ' bureaucrats ' elsewhere.

For defence against the nomad tribes, Ch'in Shih Huang Ti (221-210 B.C.) established the famous ' Great Wall,' linking together into one continuous frontier fortification the separate walls constructed in the past by the various border states of the north. The Great Wall, and many palaces and mausolea, were built by corvee labour; peasant exploitation was much increased and many of the peasantry were driven to revolt.

It was only in the period of the collapse of the " well-field " system that the merchant class succeeded in establishing a temporary independence. The unification of the Ch'in empire would in fact

scarcely have been possible without the support of rich merchants like Lu Pu-wei.

The merchants who had backed the revolution received their reward. They were incorporated into the governing class and became landowners. The exploitation of iron did not favour the growth of an independent merchant class. The economic geography of China differs in one important respect from that of the Mediterranean lands. Easily accessible sources of iron are rare in China. The state early established a monopoly of the new as of the old metals, and extended that monopoly by asserting its ownership of new iron mines. This state monopoly effectively checked the development of a mercantile class separate from the land-owning interest.

The Ch'in dynasty (221-207 B.C.) was itself short-lived; but its main achievement, the abolition of the *Ching-tien* system and the establishment of the 'bureaucracy,' was maintained by the Han dynasty (206 B.C. - 220 A.D.) and its successors.

The effect of the reform of Shang Yang is well summarised by Tung Chung-shu (140-134 B.C.), minister of the Emperor Wu Ti of the Han dynasty. He wrote :—

> In ancient times, the government took from the people no more than a tenth of their total produce, and the government's demands were easily satisfied. It required the people to do (corvee labour) no more than three days in the year . . . But in the age of Ch'in everything was changed. The Ch'in adopted the policy of Shang Yang and changed the system of the ancient kings. The *ching-t'ien* system was abolished, so that private individuals might now buy and sell the land. The rich came to own an endless expanse of land, while the poor had not enough land to stand an awl upon. The government monopolised the profits of the rivers and the lakes (i.e., the salt industry), controlled the wealth of the mountains and forests (i.e., iron) . . . Corvee labour was increased thirty-fold, and the government revenue from land tax, poll tax, and iron and salt was twenty times as much as in the old days. Those who tilled the lands of the powerful private landowners had to pay half of their harvest in rent. Now the poor wear clothes fit only for cows and horses, and eat food fit only for dogs and pigs. Moreover, corrupt and cruel officials impose punishments with no good reason, so our people have become sad and desperate, and run away to the mountains and forests to turn robbers and thieves . . . .[11]

Tung Chung-shu, like most of the Han scholars, may have minimised the exploitation of the poor under the ancient kings and exaggerated the exploitation under Ch'in Shih Huang Ti; but the difference between the two systems, before and after Ch'in, was certainly clear, and was universally felt to be the decisive change in Chinese economy. It may be summarised under four main heads :—

1. Land became alienable, and could be absorbed by powerful private landowners (nobles, 'bureaucrats' and rich merchants).

2. The ownership of land became concentrated in the hands of a few.

3. The new government monopolies of salt and iron achieved by the absorption of the original salt and iron merchants into the ranks

of the ' Bureaucracy,' blocked any possibility of the development of an independent merchant class.

4. The polarisation of Chinese society into two main antagonistic social classes ; landowners, merchants, usurers, fused into one official ' bureaucracy,' a ruling class ; the various groups of heavily taxed small landowners, artisans, and landless peasants merged into a single exploited class, whose common subjection overshadowed the differences between them.

The real nature of the Chinese economy after the Ch'in dynasty is controversial. But a great deal of the controversy is due to a lack of clarity about terms. Most modern Chinese economic historians describe China, from the Ch'in dynasty to the Opium War of 1840, as a *Feng-chien* society. From the Opium War onward they call it ' *semi-Feng-chien*.' The word properly refers to the political and military system in force under the Chou dynasties and abolished by the *Shang Yang* reforms. Modern Chinese usage has applied it to a social and economic regime and extended it to cover any pre-capitalist system in which a monopoly of land was used as the main means of exploitation. That is the sense in which it has come to be equated with ' feudalism.' But the differences between the economy of China, both before and after the reforms of Shang Yang, and the economy of western European feudalism are very great.

The main difference lay in the fully free and legal alienability of land, and the bureaucratic state control of business and industry, operated in the main through the salt and iron monopoly. In western society the main producer was the serf, tied to the soil, but in China, though slaves and serfs of course continued to exist after the Ch'in, the main producer was the free-born peasant landowner, free to move where he would, and to buy and sell his land, but subject to heavy taxation and forced labour. These features in Chinese economy prevented the development of private capitalism, and condemned China to a succession of ' Crisis-cycles.'

The ' Crisis-cycles ' in China usually coincided with, and, indeed, caused the fall and rise of dynasties. They were themselves the result of the inner contradictions inherent in the Chinese economic system.

Under the old system of the tribal, or tribute, state, rent and tax came to the same thing. The central government collected from the village commune a single impost, which might in English go by either name. With the establishment of private landownership, the land tax, paid to the government, and rent, paid to the landlord, became two separate payments. The peasantry were divided into two main groups, the small independent proprietors and the tenants.

The small independent peasant proprietors were the backbone of Chinese society. At the beginning of each dynasty they formed the majority of the peasantry. As the dynasty endured, the peasant freeholders accumulated debt, incurred in the main through excessive

taxation, and more and more of them became tenants. Unpaid taxes, coupled with the comparative freedom of the ' gentry ' from taxation, made the continuous absorption of land by the ' powerful landowners ' inevitable under successive dynasties. As one of the most famous Ming royalists of the seventeenth-century, Wang Ch'uan-shan, correctly pointed out :

> When scholars discuss the political maladministration after the Three Dynasties [*Hsia, Shang* and *Chou* — i.e., after the Ch'in dynasty and the *Shang Yang* reform], they usually point to the following conditions : absorption of land by the ' powerful landowners ' : enslavement of tenants : the annexation of a tenth of the harvest by government taxation and a half by landlord's rent. But they ignore the irregular heavy taxation by government officials and the unlimited corruption of clerks and minor officials. When the ' house-tax ' was amalgamated with the land tax, the uneducated and naive village people saw in the ownership of land itself the source of their misfortunes, and preferred to have their land absorbed by powerful private landlords, who could afford them protection and save them from exile or death . . . In these conditions, the process of concentration of land will not cease until all the land of China has come into the hands of private landowners. There is no limit to the present confusion of the world . . . .[12]

The ruling bureaucracy were intelligent enough to realise that they could not secure their rule unless they prevented the private landlords from taking too much from the peasants. But the very system from which the ' bureaucrats ' themselves drew their own income forced the process to continue in spite of them. As the amount of taxation demanded from the small peasant proprietors grew larger, more and more of them had to sell their land to the ' powerful landowners ' or appeal to them to pay their tax for them, and so made themselves subject to higher and higher rents. More and more land passed into the hands of those who paid no taxes or light taxes, while the remaining independent peasant proprietors still had to meet the government taxes, crushingly increased to meet an ever-widening deficit. The income of the landlords increased, and the income of the government declined ; its revenue no longer sufficed to support the bureaucracy, the public works or the army. As the government became less and less able to pay its employees, corruption sharply increased, and even government funds became an object of graft. When a dynasty reached this stage, either it fell before the onset of an alien nomadic group or it lost its control of the state, and the empire split into several independent ' autonomous regions.' Peasant rebellions followed, and usually resulted in a new dynasty.

These changes of dynasty normally brought a short-lived easing of the crisis. The casualties were usually enormous. These terrible devastations themselves reduced the pressure on the land ; existing holdings had fewer mouths to feed, and ownerless land passed into the hands of new, debt-free cultivators ; frequently, as after the fall of the Han, the new dynasty introduced a land reform, amounting to a redistribution of the land and a dismemberment

of the great estates of the adherents of the old regime, while the new 'bureaucrats' began on a more modest scale than their predecessors had ended. But the system of government, taxation, and land tenure remained unaltered, and the whole process began all over again.[13]

It seemed that the reform of Shang Yang was the cause of all the miseries of China, and for two thousand years many Chinese scholars and statesmen advocated a return to the *Ching-t'ien* system. But the reasons which had caused its abolition prevented its resurrection. The only ruler in Chinese history who tried seriously to revive it on a nation-wide scale, Wang Mang, at the end of the former Han dynasty (9-23 A.D.), failed bitterly.

Another favourite remedy was the curbing of the merchants. In some periods of some dynasties, most notably in the time of Wen Ti of the Han dynasty (180-157 B.C.) merchants were subjected to numerous restrictions, forbidden to wear silk, to attend state examinations, etc. But mercantile capital continued to develop despite restrictions. Its growth was determined not by the sharp wits of individual merchants, but by the needs of Chinese society. It was not even necessarily owned by merchants. When the ruling bureaucracy' or landowners invested their rents and fees in the market, their money became a part, and often the major part, of mercantile property. Although the status of the merchants was sometimes rated artificially very low, mercantile capital nevertheless flourished unchecked.[14] Moreover, since both land and office could be bought and sold, the successful merchant invested his profits in landed property and in an official 'title,' joined the upper ranks of the ruling class and still further accelerated the process of land concentration. For this reason, the development of merchant capital led, not to the formation of a capitalist class, but to the continuous reinforcement of the landowning ruling class.

For two thousand years, though many dynasties rose and fell, the basic features of Chinese society remained 'static.' Chinese despotism differed, however, from the monarchies of the Near East in that it became stagnant in the Iron Age, and had not already ossified in the Bronze Age. It was a more advanced form of depotism, based on a bureaucratic, state controlled economy. But it, too, led to a dead end.

When we say that Chinese society was 'static' for two thousand years, we mean that the social changes occurred slowly, in such a manner that they did not lead to a revolutionary change or to a different kind of society. There were of course many important developments within the framework of the 'bureaucratic' state-controlled economy. The story is a complicated one, not only because China is a vast country, whose several regions developed unevenly at different times and different rates, but because it is an agricultural country which was repeatedly subject to invasion by

nomadic tribal peoples. The impact of the nomad economy on China was very considerable. After peasant rebellion had destroyed the later Han dynasty (220 A.D.), China was invaded by ' barbarian ' Huns, the Hsien Pi, Tibetans, etc. Numerous alien empires were built in North China and the native ruling bureaucracy was forced to move from north to central and south China, and there build up its own governments. Many Chinese historians have compared this period of our history with the period of European history which followed the invasion of the Roman empire by the Germanic ' barbarians.'

There is no doubt that in the period of the South and North Dynasties (307-580 A.D.) China suffered a great setback. The money economy which had developed under the Han fell away or gave place to a natural economy.[15] Much of the rich arable land of north China was turned over to pasture, and the irrigation system deteriorated. When, by the time of the Sui dynasty (580-618 A.D.), the aliens were finally absorbed into the Chinese agricultural way of life, the economic productivity of north China had sunk so low that it was no longer in a position to support the central government. The government had to depend on the newly developed region of the lower Yangtse valley, and the problem of transporting grain from here to the northern capital led to the construction of the famous ' Imperial Canal ' uniting the Yangtse and the Yellow Rivers.

Chinese bureaucratic state-controlled economy reached its highest development in the T'ang and Sung dynasties (618-1279 A.D.), after the construction of this canal.[16] Money economy was revived and extended. Paper currency was issued under the Sung, and a credit economy developed. More trade, notably in tea, and industry, notably printing, porcelain and mining, were developed : but the ' bureaucratic ' control of trade and industry still prevented the emergence of an independent merchant class. Landed capital, linked with mercantile capital, dominated the economy of China. In the tenth-century the T'ang dynasty was overthrown by a peasant rebellion, and in its turn, in the thirteenth-century, the Sung dynasty was overthrown by the Mongol nomads. Chinese rule was revived with the Ming dynasty (1358-1644), which was brought to an end by the successful invasion of another semi-nomadic people, the Manchus (1644-1911).

Under all these conquering dynasties, and especially under the most important of them, the Yuan (Mongol) Empire[17] (1206-1368), many fresh characteristics can be discerned, but there is no sign of any significant change in the fundamental nature of the ' bureaucratic ' state-controlled economy. Usually, the conquering rulers simply made themselves the most important among the ' powerful land-owners.' Moreover, they needed the services of the native ' bureaucrats ' to maintain their rule. Gradually, their nomadic culture was transformed by the agricultural economy of China.

There is no doubt that under the conquering, as under the native, dynasties, the main income of the ruling class was drawn from landed wealth, and drawn in the same way. That is why attempts to start a study of Chinese economy by drawing a sharp distinction between conquering and native dynasties, and contrasting 'Power' with the 'less-important' category of 'Wealth'[18] are bound to fail.

Chinese economy was not basically affected by foreign contact until it experienced the impact of western industrial capitalism in the nineteenth-century. Modern industry began to be introduced. But modern industry came from the foreigner through the medium of the existing 'bureaucrats' and the 'compradors' (a class of Chinese intermediaries between the Chinese rulers and the foreigner), whose power and wealth depended on their enjoyment of the extra-territorial privileges accorded to the foreign concessionaires.

The control of industry, finance, and of the political machinery of government, passed to a numerically small section of compradors and landowners, steeped in the long tradition of two thousand years of 'gentry-bureaucrat' rule. They governed modern China in the spirit of its ancient despotism. An unfettered despotism gave opportunities for corruption on an unheard-of scale, and established the ruling clique at the expense of the emerging native industrialists and bankers. These latter groups, who in most modern states tend to a conservative support of the existing order, were thus in China driven into the arms of the revolution. It is this peculiar feature of Chinese historical development which gives the present government its wide popular support, and also determines the main lines of its economic policy. For the first time two new classes, the industrial (national) bourgeoisie and the urban proletariat, have established in China an independence which in western countries they won a century or more ago. Together with the peasants and the petit-bourgeoisie, they form the four classes on which the government of China now relies, and the four stars on the new flag of China expressly recognise their independent interests. In China to-day, the only dispossessed classes are the 'bureaucratic' monopolists and the great landlords. It is this change in the economic structure of China which entitles the present government to be regarded as beginning a new era, and not merely as another stage in the crisis-cycle.'

NOTES

[1] H. G. Creel, '*The Birth of China*' (London, 1936) is the best popular summary in English of the progress of Chinese archæology to 1935. See also the same author's '*Studies in Early Chinese Culture*' (London, 1938); and J. G. Anderssen, '*Children of the Yellow Earth*' (London, 1934).

[2] It is frequently mentioned in the literature of the period (e.g., Kuan-tze, Mencius, etc.).

[3] So far as the author is aware, Dr. Kuo Mo-jo is alone among modern Chinese scholars in rejecting the equation of the *Feng-chien* of the Chou dynasties with ' feudalism.'

[4] The description in the *Chou-li* cannot claim authority. The work is a later forgery, and not a product of Chou times.

[5] *Zeitschrift für Sozialfoschung, Paris*, 4, 1935 26 ff. (The Foundations and Stages of Chinese Economic History); 7, 1938 90 ff. (Die Theorie der orientalischen Gesellschaft); 7, 1938 123 ff. (Sozial-oekonomischen Struktur Chinas). Cf. also *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, New York (continuation of the same periodical) 8, 1939 138 ff. (The Society of Prehistoric China).

[6] The term was first employed by Marx, in a number of scattered passages, of which the most important is the recently published manuscript entitled ' Pre-capitalist Forms of Production ' (*Vjestnik Drevnii Istorii*, 1940). The conceptions which Wittfogel developed from the term are vigorously challenged both by Marxists and by most Sinologists.

[7] 481-256 B.C.

[8] Chuan Han-sheng, ' Natural Economy in the Middle Ages in China ' (1942); *Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica*, X (1948) pp. 73-173).

[9] *Wen Hsien Tung Kao*, by Ma Tuan-lin (at the end of the Sung dynasty) Vol. 1, Land Tax, p. 12.

[10] *The Book of the Lord Shang* (translated by Dr. J. J. L. Duyvendak), London, 1938.

[11] Han-shu, *Life of Tung Chung-shu.*

[12] Ch'uan Shan I Shu, Vol. 63, p. 3.

[13] Chen Tun-yuen, *The Chinese Land System*, p. 677 (Commercial Press, Shanghai).

[14] The most illuminating study of the function of mercantile capital under the various Chinese dynasties is that of Professor Wang Ya-nan in ' *The Principles of Chinese Economy*,' (Shanghai, 1948).

[15] Chuan Han-sheng, op. cit. cf. note 8.

[16] Cf. Chuan Han-sheng, ' *The T'ang and Sung Empires and the Canal*,' Chungking, 1944.

[17] Cf. Meng Su-ming, ' Social Classes under the Yuan Dynasty ' (*Yenching Journal, Pekin, Monograph series*, No. 16, 1938).

[18] This theory is advocated by K. A. Wittfogel. See Feng Chia-sheng and K. A. Wittfogel, ' *History of Chinese Society*: Liao' (Philadelphia 1948), General Introduction.

The Economic Basis of the Athenian Democracy [1]

A. H. M. Jones.

Prima facie THE ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY WOULD SEEM TO HAVE BEEN A perfectly designed machine for expressing and putting into effect the will of the people. The majority of the magistrates were annually chosen by lot from all qualified candidates who put in their names, so that every citizen had a chance to take his turn in the administration. In the fifth-century only the military officers, of whom the most important were the ten generals, who were elected by the assembly. In the fourth, when finance became a difficult problem, a few high financial officers were also elected. This was an inevitable concession to aristocratic principles : for the Greeks considered popular election to be aristocratic rather than democratic, since the ordinary voter will prefer a known to an unknown name — and in point of fact the generals usually tended to be men of wealth and family, though a professional soldier or two were usually members of the board in the fourth-century. But the assembly, of which all adult male citizens were members, kept a strict control over the generals, who received precise instructions and departed from them at their peril. The assembly was in a very real sense a sovereign body, holding forty regular meetings a year and extraordinary sessions as required, and not merely settling general questions of policy, but making detailed decisions in every sphere of government — foreign affairs, military operations, finance.

The administrative lynch-pin of the constitution was the council of five-hundred, annually chosen by lot from all the demes (wards or parishes) of Athens and Attica in proportion to their size, and thus forming a fair sample of the people as a whole. It had two main functions, to supervise and co-ordinate the activities of the magistrates, and to prepare the agenda of the assembly. No motion might be put to the assembly unless the question had been placed on the order paper by the council and duly advertised ; snap divisions were thus precluded. On uncontroversial issues the council usually produced a draft motion, which could however be freely debated and amended in the assembly by any citizen ; in this way much formal business was cleared away. On controversial issues the council normally — and naturally in view of its composition — forebore to express an opinion, and merely put the question before the

people, leaving it to any citizen to draft the motion during the actual debate. The presidents of the council and the assembly were chosen daily by lot from the council to preclude any undue influence from the chair.

Finally, as ultimate guardians of the constitution, there were the popular law courts. Juries were empanelled by lot for each case from a body of six-thousand citizens annually chosen by lot, and decided not only private cases but political issues. These juries as a regular routine judged any charges of peculation or malfeasance brought against magistrates on laying down their office ; they decided the fate of any citizen accused of treason or of " deceiving the people " by his speeches in the assembly ; they could quash any motion voted in the assembly as being contrary to the laws, and punish its author. Political trials were frequent in Athens, and in the fourth-century in particular the indictment for an illegal motion was constantly employed for political purposes, often on very technical grounds. The result was that the popular juries — in such cases sometimes thousands strong — tended to become a Supreme Court.

In general all citizens who were not expressly disqualified for some offence, such as unpaid debt to the treasury, had equal political rights : in particular all could speak and vote in the assembly. For membership of the council and of the juries and probably for all magistracies there was an age qualification of thirty years. For offices, or at any rate some of them, there were also qualifications of property : but these were mostly moderate and, by the late fourth-century, at any rate, and probably by the fifth, were in practice ignored.[2] To make the system work truly democratically it was further necessary that every citizen, however poor, should be able to afford the time for exercising his political rights, and from the time of Pericles pay was provided for this purpose.[3] Magistrates were paid at varying rates according to the nature of their duties;[4] members of the council received five obols a day by the fourth-century — the rate may have been lower in the fifth ;[5] and members of the juries were given a subsistence allowance of two obols, raised in 425 B.C. to three.[6] Finally from the beginning of the fourth-century citizens who attended the assembly — or rather the quorum who arrived first, for a limited sum of money was allocated to each assembly — were paid a subsistence allowance of one, then two, then three obols.[7] Later the rate was more liberal, one drachma for ordinary days, one and a half for the ten standing meetings when the agenda was heavier.[8]

Two charges have been brought against the Athenian democracy, one both by ancient and by modern critics, the other in recent times only. The first is that the pay, which was an essential part of the system, was provided by the tribute paid by Athens' allies in the Delian League, and that the democracy was therefore parasitic

on the empire: the second, that Athenians only had the leisure to perform their political functions because they were supported by slaves — the democracy was in fact parasitic on slavery.

To the first charge there is a very simple answer, that the democracy continued to function in the fourth-century when Athens had lost her empire; the Second Athenian League, which lasted effectively only from 377 to 357, was never a paying proposition, the contributions of the allies by no means covering the cost of military and naval operations. And not only did the democracy continue to function, but a new and important form of pay, that for attendance in the assembly, was introduced early in the century. This being so it is hardly worth while to go into the financial figures, particularly as there must be many gaps in our calculations. The magistrates numbered about 350 in the later fourth-century, and, if they received on an average one drachma a day, the annual bill would be 21 talents.[9] The council, if all the members were paid for every day of the year, would have cost rather under 26 talents a year, but if councillors, like jurors, were paid for actual attendance, the bill would be considerably less, since sessions were not held every day and many members did not attend regularly.[10] Assembly pay cannot be calculated as we do not know how large the quorum was. The major item was the 6,000 jurors, for whom Aristophanes[11] budgets 150 talents a year, presumably by the simple method of multiplying 3 obols by 6,000 jurors by 300 court days (the courts did not sit on the forty or more assembly days[12] nor on the numerous festivals).[13] This is a theoretical maximum, for the whole 6,000 were not empanelled in juries on every court day — Aristophanes' jurors arise at dead of night to queue for their tickets.[14] As against this, the internal revenue of Athens, apart from imperial receipts, can be inferred to have been in the range of 400 talents a year in the fifth-century.[15] Since other peacetime expenditure was minimal pay was thus amply covered by internal income at this period. In the fourth-century the revenue dropped considerably; Demosthenes indeed states that earlier in the century it amounted to only 130 talents.[16] He is perhaps thinking of the regular income from taxes and rents, excluding receipts from fines, confiscations, and court fees, which were a considerable proportion of the whole.[17] Even so, we know that in the first half of the fourth-century it was at times a tight squeeze.[18] By 340, however, the regular revenue had risen to 400 talents again, and things were easy.[19]

That Athens profited financially from her empire is of course true. But these profits were not necessary to keep the democracy working. They enabled Athens to be a great power, and to support a much larger citizen population at higher standards of living. One oligarchic critic emphasises the casual profits incidental on Athens' position as an imperial city; the imperial litigation which brought in more court fees, the increased customs revenue, the demand for

lodgings, cabs and slaves to hire.[20] Advocates and politicians made money by pleading the legal cases of the allies, and promoting measures in their favour. But these were chicken-feed compared with the solid benefits of empire, the tribute amounting to 400 talents a year and other imperial income raising the annual total to 600 talents,[21] and the acquisition of land overseas, mainly by confiscation from rebellious allied communities or individuals.[22]

The land was utilized either for colonies, which were technically separate states, but being composed of former Athenian citizens were virtually overseas extensions of the Athenian state, or for cleruchies, that is settlements of Athenians who remained full citizens, liable to Athenian taxation and military service, though in practice they naturally would rarely exercise their citizen rights at Athens.[23] Both types of settlement were normally manned from the poorer citizens.[24] Most will have come from the lowest property class, *thetes*, who possessed property rated under 2,000 drachmae[25] and were liable only for naval service or as light-armed troops on land.[26] The allotments were (in the one case where figures are given) of sufficient value to qualify the owner to rank as a *zeugites*, liable to military service as a heavy-armed infantryman or hoplite.[27] By her colonies and clerichies Athens raised more than ten thousand[28] of her citizens from poverty to modest affluence, and at the same time increased her hoplite force by an even larger number, the cleruchs with their adult sons serving in the ranks of the Athenian army and the colonists as allied contingents.[29]

The tribute was partly spent on the upkeep of a standing navy, partly put to reserve. Pericles is stated to have kept sixty triremes in commission for eight months in the year,[30] and he maintained a fleet of three hundred in the dockyards.[31] The dockyards must have given employment to an army of craftsmen, as well as to 500 guards,[32] and the crews of the cruising triremes would have numbered 12,000 men, paid a drachma a day[33] for 240 days in the year. Not all the dockyard workers will have been citizens, nor all the naval ratings, but many thousands of Athenian *thetes* enjoyed regular well-paid employment thanks to the empire. Of the money put to reserve a part, probably 2,000 talents,[34] was spent on public works, notably the Parthenon and the Propylaea, which again, as Plutarch explains,[35] gave employment to the poorer classes. The remainder formed a war fund of 6,000 talents, which was ultimately spent during the Peloponnesian war on pay to hoplites and sailors.[36]

In response to the favourable economic conditions provided by the empire the population of Athens seems to have risen by leaps and bounds during the half-century between the Persian war (480-479) and the opening of the Peloponnesian war (431). The figures are unfortunately very incomplete and not altogether certain, but the general picture is clear enough ; they refer to citizens liable to military and naval service, that is males between 20 and 60. At Salamis (480)

the Athenians manned 180 triremes,[37] which required 36,000 men. As Attica had been evacuated and no army was mustered this figure probably represents the whole able-bodied population including resident aliens, so that the citizens may be reckoned at about 30,000. At Artemisium, earlier in the same year, the Athenians, supplemented by the population of the little city of Plataea, had manned 127 triremes[38] (25,400 men, perhaps 20,000 Athenians). As an invasion of Attica was expected the hoplites were probably held in reserve and only *thetes* served in the fleet. At Plataea (479) 8,000 Athenian hoplites fought,[39] but a large fleet was simultaneously in commission, which will have carried perhaps 2,000 marines of hoplite status: for Marathon (490) Athens had mustered 9,000 hoplites.[40] These figures suggest a total population of 30,000 citizens, a figure given elsewhere by Herodotus,[41] divided 1 : 2 between hoplites and *thetes*. At the opening of the Peloponnesian war there were well over 20,000 citizen hoplites on the muster rolls.[42] The rise will have been due partly to the general rise in prosperity which enabled many *thetes*, who owned little or no land, to acquire sufficient house-property, slaves, or cash capital to qualify as hoplites; but mainly to the grant of allotments of land to *thetes* in the cleruchies.[43] For the thetic class we have no reliable figures, for the large fleets which Athens commissioned at this period were certainly manned not only by citizens but by resident aliens and by foreigners drawn from the cities of the empire.[44] But if, as Plutarch suggests,[45] the sixty ships kept regularly in commission during peace time were largely manned by citizens, the crews of these, together with sundry standing land forces (1,600 archers and 500 shipyard guards, for instance[46]) and the 6,000 jurors, of whom a large proportion were probably *thetes*, would account for 20,000 men, and in addition there were the workers employed in the shipyards, on public works and in private industry. Despite the rise of many thousands into the hoplite class, the *thetes* must have certainly maintained and probably considerably increased their numbers. It is worthy of note that a fair proportion of the new hoplites resided abroad in cleruchies, whereas the *thetes* mostly lived in Athens and Piraeus. This helps to account for the radical tone of the fifth-century democracy, and the predominance, noted with disfavour by oligarchic critics, of the "naval masses" in its councils.

The Peloponnesian war caused great losses both by battle casualties and by the plague: 1,000 hoplites fell at Delium[47] and 600 at Amphipolis,[48] and 2,700 hoplites and 130 triremes carrying perhaps 13,000 citizen sailors, if half the crews were Athenians, were sent to Sicily,[49] of whom only a remnant ever saw Athens again, while in the plague 4,700 men of hoplite status and an uncounted number of *thetes* perished.[50] Towards the end of the war (411) there seem to have been only 9,000 hoplites resident in Attica,[51] and after the war the cleruchs were all dispossessed. In 322 the hoplite class still numbered only 9,000 despite a revival of prosperity. By

that date the *thetes* numbered only 12,000.[52] Other evidence suggests that both figures were about the same earlier in the century.[53] The loss of the empire and the fall of Athens in 404 must have compelled many thousands of citizens, dispossessed cleruchs and unemployed sailors and dockyard workers, to emigrate or take service as mercenaries abroad. A general decrease in prosperity caused the population to sink to a level well below that of the Persian wars, and in particular reduced the thetic class. Hence the increasingly bourgeois tone of the fourth-century democracy.

The second charge against the Athenian democracy, that it was parasitic on slavery, is more difficult to answer with any certainty. It will be as well first to make plain the elements of the problem. The Athenians, like all Greek peoples, regarded themselves as a kinship group, and citizenship depended strictly on descent (always on the father's side and, by a law passed in 451 and re-enacted in 403, on the mother's side also) and not on residence, however long. The population of Attica therefore consisted not only of citizens, but of free aliens, mainly immigrants who had settled permanently and often lived at Athens for generations, but also including freed slaves and persons of mixed descent ; and of slaves, mainly imported but some home-bred. It is unhistorical to condemn the Athenian democracy because it did not give political rights to all residents of Attica ; it was the democracy of the Athenian people. It is however relevant to enquire whether the Athenian people was a privileged group depending on the labour of others. Sparta might be called technically a democracy (though the herditary kings and the council of elders balanced the power of the people) inasmuch as the whole body of Spartiates chose the ephors, in whose hands the government effectively lay, but the Spartiates were a body of *rentiers* supported by ten or twenty times the number of native serfs, the helots. Was the Athenian democracy of this order ? The resident aliens (metics) do not concern us here. They made a great contribution to Athenian prosperity, particularly in the fields of industry, commerce and banking — indeed they seem to have dominated the two latter. They were voluntary immigrants and could leave when they wished (except in time of war). That so many domiciled themselves permanently in Attica — a census taken at the end of the fourth-century showed 10,000 metics as against 21,000 citizens — is a testimony to their liberal treatment. They enjoyed full civil (as opposed to political) rights, except that they could not own land — hence their concentration on industry and commerce — and were subject to all the duties of citizens, including military and naval service and taxation at a slightly higher scale. They were a contented class, and many demonstrated their loyalty to their adoptive city by generous gifts at times of crisis.[54]

What of slaves ? Here it will be as well to clear up another misconception. It is often stated, mainly on the authority of Plato

and Aristotle, that " the Greeks " considered manual work degrading. Now it is true that gentlemen like Plato and Aristotle despised workers and justified their contempt by asserting that manual work deformed the body and the soul. But that this was the attitude of the average poor Greek there is no evidence. An anecdote recorded by Xenophon[55] probably gives a better insight into his point of view. Eutherus, a dispossessed cleruch, has been reduced to earning his living by manual labour. Socrates asks what he will do when his bodily strength fails and suggests that he find a job as a rich man's bailiff. Eutherus is horrified at the suggestion — ' I could not endure to be a slave . . . I absolutely refuse to be at any man's beck and call". What the Athenian *thes* objected to was not hard work — incidentally his main military duty in the fifth-century was rowing in the galleys, a task in most later civilisations considered fit only for infidel slaves or convicts — but being another man's servant. He would work as an independent craftsman or at a pinch as a casual labourer,[56] but he would not take even a black-coated job as a regular employee ; we find that such highly responsible posts as the manager of a bank or the foreman overseer of a mine are filled by slaves or freedmen of the owner.[57]

Is it true, as we are still too often told, that the average Athenian, in the intervals between listening to a play of Sophocles and serving as a magistrate, councillor or juror, lounged in the market place, discussing politics and philosophy, while slaves toiled to support him ? Contemporary critics of the democracy did not think so. Plato's Socrates, analysing the people in a democracy, divides them into the drones, that is the active politicians and their cliques of supporters, and the mass of the people " who support themselves by their labour and do not care about politics, owning very little property ; this is the largest and most powerful element in a democracy when it is assembled."[58] Xenophon's Socrates, rebuking Charmides for his shyness at addressing the assembly, asks if he is afraid " of the fullers among them or the shoemakers or the carpenters or the smiths or the peasants or the merchants or the shopkeepers : for the assembly is composed of all of them."[59] Aristotle, analysing the people (that is the mass of poor citizens) in different cities, classifies them as craftsmen, shopkeepers, seamen of various kinds — fishermen, ferrymen, sailors on merchantmen or warships — and casual day labourers and those who have little property so that they can enjoy no leisure.[60]

Slaves were employed in many capacities — as domestic servants, as clerks and agents in commerce and banking, in agriculture, and in industry and mining. All well-to-do Athenian families had several servants, and no doubt wealthy men kept large households of a dozen or more — precise figures are lacking — but the domestic servant probably did not go very far down the social scale. A man for whom Lysias wrote a little speech does indeed roundly assert that

everyone has slaves ; but he is trying to convince the jury that it is contrary to public policy to encourage slaves to inform against their masters.[61] In comedy domestic slaves appear when dramatically convenient, even in the poorest households,[62] but this evidence is suspect : comedy was written after all by well-to-do authors, and slaves provided a variety of stock comic turns. It has been argued that because in the fifth-century every hoplite took with him an attendant to carry his food and kit, and was allowed a drachma a day by the state on his account (in addition to his own drachma[63]) that every hoplite must have owned an able bodied male slave. Those hoplites who owned suitable slaves certainly used them for this purpose,[64] but there is no evidence that every hoplite's attendant was his own slave. The high rate of the state allowance, on the contrary, is only explicable on the assumption that many hoplites would have to hire a man for the purpose, and Thucydides' inclusion of the baggage carriers with the light armed among the Athenian casualties at Delium implies that they were citizens.[65] More significant than these uncertain inferences is a remark by Demosthenes, who, castigating the harshness with which Androtion and Timocrates collected the arrears of war-tax, pictures them " removing doors and seizing blankets and distraining on a servant girl, if anyone employed one."[66] Now the payers of war tax can be estimated to have numbered only about 6,000 out of a population of 21,000.[67] If not all of them had a domestic servant, one may hazard that under a quarter of the population enjoyed that luxury.

Commerce and banking need not detain us, as the numbers were small. In agriculture, too, we hear little of slaves. The property of large landowners did not normally consist of a single great estate, but of several farms scattered over Attica.[68] Some of these farms were let to free tenants, Athenian or metic[69] ; one at least — the home farm — would be worked by a minimum staff of slaves, supplemented by hired labour[70] ; for it was uneconomic in a seasonal trade like agriculture to maintain all the year round enough slaves to cope with peak demands. The hired labour was sometimes supplied by slave gangs, leased from a contractor to do a particular job, such as to get in the harvest or the vintage[71] ; but it often consisted of free persons — in one of his private speeches Demosthenes remarks that many citizen women were driven by poverty to work in the harvest.[72] Shepherds seem normally to have been slaves,[77] but the politician Phrynichus is alleged to have been one in his poverty-stricken youth.[74] How far down the scale of wealth the use of agricultural slaves went it is difficult to say, but the greater part of Attica was probably occupied by peasant farmers too poor to afford them. Of the six thousand citizens who paid war tax, a large number were, as Demosthenes puts it, " farmers who stinted themselves, but owing to the maintenance of their children and domestic expenses and other public demands fell into arrears with their war tax."[75]

These were the men who often could not afford a single domestic servant, and certainly did not maintain a farm hand ; they would fall into the class which Aristotle described as using the labour of their wives and children through lack of slaves.[76] Below them were the remaining three thousand of the hoplite class who did not qualify for war tax, and will have owned property to the value of between 25 and 20 minae.[77] These were quite poor men ; Demosthenes introducing a poor hoplite witness apologies to the jury — " he is poor, it is true, but not a rascal "[78] — and the wealthy Mantitheus, when his deme mustered for a call-up, found that many of his fellow-demesmen were embarrassed for journey-money, and distributed 30 drachmae to each.[79] A farm worth 20 minae would, on the basis of the single land price recorded, comprise about five acres, and would bring in if let only about 160 drachmae a year in rent, not enough to feed, let alone clothe, a single man ; it can only have supported a family if worked by family labour.[80]

In industry, and particularly mining, slaves were employed on a larger scale. The wealthy Nicias in the fifth-century is said to have owned 1,000 slaves, whom he let out to a mining contractor at one obol a day, the contractor feeding and clothing them and replacing casualties; two rich contemporaries are said to have owned 600 and 300 respectively whom they exploited in a similar way.[81] In the fourth-century another mine concessionaire owned 30 slaves,[82] which was probably a more usual number. Well-to-do Athenians also normally invested a small proportion of their wealth in slave craftsmen, who either worked together in a factory, or independently, paying their owner a fixed sum and keeping for themselves whatever they earned beyond it. The largest factory of which we hear, the shield factory of the brothers Lysias and Polemarchus, numbered nearly 120 men ;[83] but this is quite exceptional, and is due to the fact that the owners were metics, who could not invest in land, and that the thirty years of the Peloponnesian War had naturally led to a boom in armaments. In the fourth-century Pasion the banker also ran a shield factory as a side-line ; it brought in a net revenue of a talent a year, and must have contained over 60 men ; Pasion again was a metic, until he was rewarded with the citizenship for his public services,[84] and he was the richest man in Athens of the time — he had before he died acquired land to the value of 20 talents besides his bank and factory. Demosthenes' father was also exceptional in owning two factories, 32 knife makers and 20 bed makers, with a capital value of nearly 6½ talents (4 talents in slaves and 2½ talents in raw materials in stock) out of a total fortune of 14 talents, the rest of which was in cash and investments with the exception of his house and furniture.[85] We hear of some others in the fifth-century whose wealth was entirely invested in slaves ; Isocrates' father rose to affluence from the profits of a group of flute-makers,[86] and Xenophon makes Socrates cite five contemporaries, including a miller, a baker and cloakmaker, who

lived comfortably on the earnings of their slaves.[87] More usually rich Athenians seem to have distributed their capital between land, house-property, some cash investments and a dozen or so slave craftsmen. Socrates, asking a high-class prostitute where her money came from, suggests (ironically) land, house-property or craftsmen as typical sources of income.[88] Timocrates inherited, besides land and houses, nine or ten shoemakers, who paid two obols a day each as rent:[89] Leostratus owned bronzesmiths to the value of 35 minae (about a dozen, that is[90]): Ciron, besides an estate worth a talent, and two houses, owned a few rent-paying slaves, valued with three domestic slaves and the furniture at 13 minae:[91] Euctaeus possessed a farm, a house, a baths, and a brothel and wineshop and some craftsmen.[92]

These facts and figures concern the well-to-do families who could afford to pay a professional speech-writer to compose a plea in their mutual litigation about their inheritances, and who normally belonged to the 1,200 richest families enrolled on the trierarchic register. How far humbler folk owned industrial slaves it is very difficult to say. Xenophon in one passage speaks of those who could buying slaves as fellow-workers,[93] which might suggest that a craftsman sometimes bought a man and trained him as an apprentice; and a poor cripple, pleading for his public assistance of 1 obol a day, complains that he is getting old and his children are too young to support him (a rather unlikely conjunction of pleas) and that he is too poor to buy a slave to carry on his work.[94] This may suggest that a craftsman who bought a slave and trained him was looking forward to retiring on his earnings. But, as Aristophanes recognised, the greater part of the work in industry as in agriculture was done by poor citizens. Addressing them Poverty declared in the *Plutus*: "If wealth should gain his sight again and distribute himself equally, no one would practice a craft or skill. And when you have lost both of these, who will work as a smith or a shipwright or a tailor or a wheelwright or a shoemaker or a bricklayer or a launderer or a tanner or plough the land or harvest the crops, if you can live in idleness and neglect all this work?"

We have no reliable evidence for the total number of slaves in Attica at any time. For the late fourth-century we have two figures, which, if we could rely on them, would be startling. The Byzantine lexicon of Suidas[95] cites Hypereides (probably in connection with his proposal to free the slaves after the battle of Chaeronea in 338 B.C.) as speaking of "more than 150,000 from the silver mines and over the rest of the country." Athenaeus,[96] who wrote at the end of the second century A.D., quotes Ctesicles, a chronicler of unknown date, as stating that at the census held by Demetrius of Phaleron (317-07) 400,000 slaves were registered. These are, as Beloch[97] has convincingly demonstrated, quite impossible figures, and must have been corrupted in the course of their transmission to the late

sources in which we read them. To turn to more reliable, if less explicit evidence, according to Thucydides more than twenty thousand slaves, mainly industrial, escaped during the ten years' occupation of Deceleia by the Spartans[98]; these would probably be in the main miners and agricultural slaves, but would include many city workers, since the seventeen miles of city walls cannot have been so completely patroled as to prevent escapes. Xenophon declares that the mines could provide employment for many more than ten thousand, as those — if any — who remembered what the slave tax used to fetch before the Deceleian war could testify (he was writing sixty years later).[99] But whatever their numbers their distribution is fairly clear. They were owned in the main by the 1,200 richest families and in decreasing numbers by the next 3,000 or so. It is unlikely that any slaves were owned by two-thirds to three-quarters of the citizen population. The great majority of the citizens earned their living by the work of their hands, as peasant farmers, craftsmen, shopkeepers, seamen and labourers; so contemporary witnesses state, and so the detailed evidence, so far as it goes, suggests. In only one occupation was slave labour predominant, in mining, and even here, contrary to common belief, some citizens worked. Xenophon, advocating that the state acquire a large body of slaves to be leased to the citizens for use in the mines, suggests that not only will existing contractors add to their manpower but that " there are many of those who are themselves in the mines who are growing old, and many others, both Athenians and aliens, who would not or could not work with their hands, but would gladly make their living by supervising."[100] In one of the Demosthenic speeches we meet a man who boasts " In earlier times I made a lot of money from the silver mines, working and toiling myself with my own hands ": he had struck lucky and was now one of the three hundred richest men in Athens.[101]

That the poorer citizens lived on state pay for political services is, even for the fourth-century, when the system was most fully developed, demonstrably false. A man could only be a councillor two years in his life, and could hold none of the magistracies chosen by lot for more than one annual tenure.[102] He could by attending the assembly — and getting there in time to qualify for pay — earn a drachma on thirty days and one and a half drachmae on ten days in the year. On some festivals — the number varied according to the state of the exchequer — he could draw his theoric payment of of 2 obols.[103] On other days, if lucky enough to be successful in the annual ballot for the 6,000 jurors, he could queue in hopes of being empanelled on a jury and earning 3 obols, just enough to feed himself. At this rate a bachelor without dependants could barely with consistent good luck scrape a living; for a man with a family it was quite impossible.

The majority of the citizens were then workers who earned their

own livings and whose political pay served only to compensate them in some measure for loss of working time. Agricultural and industrial slaves in the main merely added to the wealth of a relatively small rentier class, whose principal source of income was land; this same class employed most of the domestic slaves. It only remains to ask how far the Athenian state drew its revenue, directly or indirectly, from slaves. The state owned a certain number of slaves. Most famous are the 1,200 Scythian archers who policed the assembly and the law courts and enforced the orders of the magistrates.[104] There were a number of others ranging from the workers in the mint to the city gaoler and the public slave par excellence who had custody of the public records and accounts. Athens thus ran her police force and her rudimentary civil service in part by slave labour—the clerks of the magistrates were mostly salaried citizens.[105] There was apparently a tax on slaves, known only from the mention in Xenophon cited above,[106] but it can hardly have been an important item in the revenue to receive so little notice. The mines, which were mainly exploited by slave labour, also brought in revenue to the state, but less than might have been expected seeing that concessionaries sometimes made large fortunes. The mines flourished in the fifth-century, from their first serious exploitation in 483 till the Spartan occupation of Deceleia in 413. They then went through a prolonged bad period till the 330s, when they were again in full swing. We have no figures for the fifth-century. In the fourth we have a full record of one year's concessions (367-6), when the sums paid totalled 3,690 drachmae, and a partial record of a later year — probably 342-1 — when the revenue came to about 3 talents.[107] There may have been a royalty payment of 1/24th in addition to the prices paid for concessions, but, as there is no contemporary record of this payment, which is mentioned only by a Byzantine lexicographer, [108] this is doubtful. It is somewhat mysterious where the 400 talents of Athenian revenue came from, but a negligible proportion of it arose even indirectly from slave labour.

The charge brought by fifth-century oligarchic critics (and thoughtlessly repeated by many modern writers), that the Athenian democracy depended for its political pay on the tribute of the subject allies, was brought to the test of fact when Athens lost her empire in 403 B.C., and was proved to be a calumny when the democracy continued to pay the citizens for their political functions out of domestic revenues. The modern charge that the Athenian democracy was dependent on slave labour was never brought to the test, since the Athenians never freed all their slaves. This is not surprising, for slavery was an established institution, which most people accepted without question as " according to nature," and to abolish it would have meant a wholesale disregard of the rights of property, which the Athenians throughout their history were careful

to respect. It is more surprising that on some occasions of crisis motions for a partial or wholesale freeing of slaves were carried. In 406 all male slaves of military age were freed and granted the citizenship to man the ships which won the battle of Arginusae.[109] After the expulsion of the Thirty in 403 Thrasybulus, the left wing leader of the restored democracy, carried a measure, later quashed as illegal by the moderate leader Archinus, to free and enfranchise all slaves who had fought for the democracy.[110] In 338, after the defeat of Chaeronea, the left wing politician Hypereides proposed and carried a motion to free all (able bodied male) slaves to resist the Macedonians; this motion was again quashed as illegal by a conservative politician.[111]

These facts suggest that there was no bitterness between the mass of the citizens and the slaves, but rather a sense of fellow-feeling. This was a point which shocked contemporary Athenian oligarchs. The " old oligarch " speaks bitterly of the insolence of slaves at Athens, and complains that it is illegal to strike them — the reason, he explains, is that the people are indistinguishable in dress and general appearance from slaves, and it would be easy to strike a citizen by mistake.[112] The moderate oligarch Theramenes is careful to assure his colleagues among the Thirty that he is not one of " those who think there would not be a good democracy until slaves and those who through poverty would sell the city for a drachma participate in it."[113] Plato mocks at the excess of freedom in the democracy, in which " men and women who have been sold are no less free than their purchasers."[114]

Though the Athenians treated their slaves with a humanity which was exceptional according to the standards of the time, they never abolished slavery, and the charge that Athenian democracy was dependent on their labour was never brought to the test of fact. But had Hypercides' motion been allowed to stand, and extended to slaves of all ages and both sexes, it would not seem, on the basis of the evidence cited earlier in this article, that its affects would have been catastrophic. All wealthy and well to do citizens (or rather their wives and unmarried daughters) would have been incommoded by having to do their own housework. A very small number of wealthy or comfortably off men who had invested all their money in mining and industrial slaves would have been reduced to penury. and a larger number, but still a small minority, would have lost the proportion of their income which derived from industrial slaves, and would have had to let their farms instead of cultivating them by slave labour. A number of craftsmen would have lost their apprentices and journeymen. But the great majority of Athenians who owned no slaves but cultivated their own little farms or worked on their own as craftsmen, shopkeepers or labourers, would have been unaffected.

NOTES

[1] For the convenience of readers unfamiliar with Attic currency, the following table is given :

1 talent = 60 minae = 6,000 drachmae
1 mina = 100 drachmae
1 drachma = 6 obols

Owing to the very different standards of living and patterns of spending it is useless and even misleading to try to translate Attic into modern currency, expecially now when the value of money is changing so fast. The following facts will give a rough idea of the value of money in fifth- and fourth-century Athens (fourth-century prices and wages were higher than fifth.) In the Erechtheium accounts (I.G.^{2}, I, 373-4) of 409/8-407/6 B.C. the standard wage (for citizens, metics and slaves alike) is 1 drachma per day, occasionally 1½ drachmae. In the Eleusinian accounts (I.G.^{2}, II-III, 1672-3) of 329/8 and 327/6 B.C. unskilled labourers get 1½ drachmae per day, skilled men, 2, 2½ or 3 drachmae. In 351 B.C. Demosthenes (IV 28) reckons 2 obols a day as ration allowance for soldiers and sailors : as he is trying to prove that his projected standing force can be cheaply maintained he is probably being optimistic. In the Eleusinian accounts public slaves are allowed 3 obols a day for food, and ephebes (young men of 18 and 19 undergoing military training) in the 330's were allowed 4 obols a day for their rations (Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 42.3). Clothing was relatively dear. Tunics bought for the Eleusinian public slaves cost over 7 drachmae each, leather jerkins 4½, 3 or 2½, and shoes 6 drachmae a pair ; a cloak is priced in Aristophanes' *Plutus*, 982-3 (of 388 B.C.) at 20 drachmae, and shoes at 8 drachmae — perhaps rather high prices in the context. For the maintenance of two girls and a boy, with a male nurse and a maid in about 400 B.C. Lysias (XXXII.28) allows 1,000 drachmae a year and Demosthenes (XXVII.36), speaking in 363 B.C., accepts 700 drachmae a year as a reasonable sum for the maintenance of himself and his sister and mother during his minority. These work out at about 3½ obols and nearly 4 obols each per day, which seems very little, but rent is not included and Greeks considered that women and children ate much less than men. Disabled citizens who could do no work and owned less than three minae were given public assistance at the rate of 1 obol a day in the early fourth-century and 2 obols in the late fourth (Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 49.4, Lysias, XXIV.13), but this was merely a dole ; Lysias' client did follow a trade.

[2] Aristotle (*Ath. Pol.*, 7.4) commenting on Solon's exclusion of *thetes* from all offices, remarks : διὸ καὶ νῦν ἐπειδὰν ἔρηται τὸν μέλλοντα κληροῦσθαί τιν' ἀρχήν, ποῖον τέλος τελεῖ, οὐδ' ἂν εἰς εἴποι θητικόν. This seems to imply that the Solonian rule was still technically in force, but ignored in practice. Similarly with the higher qualification for the Treasurers of Athena : κληροῦται δ' εἷς ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς ἐκ πεντακοσιομεδίμνων κατὰ τὸν Σόλωνος νόμον (ἔτι γὰρ ὁ νόμος κύριός ἐστιν), ἄρχει δ' ὁ λαχὼν κἂν πάνυ πένης ᾖ (Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 47.1). The "old oligarch" declares that in his day (c. 425 B.C.) the δῆμος (which in his political terminology means roughly the *thetes*) filled the offices appointed by lot ([Xen.], *Ath. Pol.*, 1.3).

[3] Actually Pericles is only recorded to have introduced pay for jurors (Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 27.3), but this was presumably the last stage in the process. Plato (*Gorgias*, 515e) attributes pay in general to Pericles.

[4] For pay for office in general see [Xen.], *Ath. Pol.*, 1.3., Thuc., VIII. 67.3, Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 24.3, 29.5. Aristotle gives a few specific rates in *Ath. Pol.*, 62.2 (4 obols for the nine archons, a drachma for sundry other offices ; cf. also 42.3). Aristophanes (*Ach.*, 66, 90) suggests that ambassadors received 2 drachmae (but Westermann in *Class. Phil.*, 1910, pp. 203-16 infers about 1½ drachmae from inscriptions ; this would include travelling expenses) and also that taxiarchs were paid, apparently 3 drachmae (*id. ib.* 595-607 cf. Larsen, *Class. Phil.*, 1946, pp. 91-8), contrary to the general view (based on a misinterpretation of [Xen.], *Ath. Pol.*, 1.3) that the elective military offices were unpaid.

[5] Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 62.2. It might be inferred from 29.5 that the fifth-century rate was 3 obols, but a decree which abolished all pay except for a few essential offices may have reduced the rates for these.

[6] Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 27.3, 62.2, Schol. on Aristoph., *Wasps*, 88, 300. The τριώβολον is first mentioned in the *Knights* (51, 255 etc.) of 424 B.C.

[7] Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 41.3. It appears from Aristoph., *Eccl.*, 183-8, 380-93 (cf. 289-310), that only a limited number who arrived first got the pay, and that it was already (393-1 B.C.) 3 obols.

[8] Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 62.2.

[9] The number 350 is based on a count from Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 47-61, which is a fairly exhaustive list (compare Gilbert, *Greek Const. Ant.*, pp. 230-65, Busolt-Swoboda, *Griechische Staatskunde*, II, pp. 1081-1150). Our information for the fifth-century is very incomplete, but known cases of old offices abolished and new offices created about cancel out. Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 24.3, ἀρχαὶ δ' ἐνδημοι μὲν εἰς ἑπτακοσίους ἄνδρας, ὑπερόριοι δ' εἰς ἑπτακοσίους, is certainly corrupt on linguistic grounds, apart from being statistically impossible ; perhaps the author gave 350 as the total for each class, making a total of 700. For rates of pay see note 4. A drachma seems on our limited evidence fairly universal, and if some got more, others got less, and some it appears only perquisites (e.g. the *athlothetae*, according to Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 62.2, dined at public expense during the month in which the Panathenaea was held).

[10] The council was summoned ὅσαι ἡμέραι πλὴν ἐάν τις ἀφέσιμος ᾖ (Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 43.3 : the excepted days would include festivals and assembly days, leaving perhaps 300). For irregular attendance see Dem., XXII. 36. Thuc., VIII. 69.4, ἐπέστησαν τοῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ κυάμου βουλευταῖς οὖσιν ἐν τῷ βουλευτηρίῳ καὶ εἶπον αὐτοῖς ἐξιέναι λαβοῦσι τὸν μισθόν. ἔφερον δ' αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ ὑπολοίπου χρόνου παντὸς αὐτοὶ καὶ ἐξιοῦσιν ἐδίδοσαν, has been taken to imply that councillors received a daily wage irrespective of attendance, but it is equally possible (and indeed suggested by the emphatic παντός) that the oligarchs gave the councillors the maximum they could have earned to get them to go quietly. Evidently members were paid day by day (since they were already paid up to date) and it is difficult to believe that in these circumstances they could claim for days when they were absent or no session was held.

[11] *Wasps*, 661-3.

[12] Dem., XXIV. 80.

[13] [Xen.], *Ath. Pol.*, 3.7.

[14] *Wasps*, 100 ff., 216 ff., etc.

[15] The figure is obtained by deducting 600 talents given by Thuc., II. 13.3 as the gross revenue from the empire, from 1,000 talents given by Xenophon (*Anab.*, VII. i.27) as the combined home and imperial revenue (both refer to the beginning of the Peloponnesian war). This is roughly confirmed by Aristophanes (*Wasps*, 656-60), who gives 2,000 talents as the toal revenue from all sources when the imperial tribute had been raised to 1,460 talents on paper (see *Ath. Trib. Lists*, III, pp. 344 ff.).

[16] Dem., X. 37.

[17] For this distinction see Dem., XXIV. 96-101.

[18] Lysias, XIX. 11., XXVII. 1., XXX. 22., Dem., XXIV. 96-101.

[19] Dem., X. 38, Theopompus, *FGH*, II. 115, fr. 166.

[20] [Xen.], *Ath. Pol.*, 1. 16-8.

[21] Thuc., II. 13.3 gives 600 talents, but the quota lists show a yield of only about 400 talents from the tribute of the allies (see *Ath. Trib. Lists*, III, pp. 333 ff.).

[22] e.g. in 446 B.C. after the suppression of the Euboean revolt all the inhabitants of Hestiaea were expelled and replaced by an Athenian colony (Thuc., I. 114.3), while at Chalcis the aristocracy only were expropriated in favour of Athenian cleruchs (Aelian, *V.H.*, VI. 1., Plut., *Pericles*, 23).

[23] Gilbert, *Greek Const. Ant.*, pp. 449-53, Busolt-Swoboda, *Griechische Staatskunde*, II, 1271-9. For the liability to military service the best evidence is two casualty lists (*IG*², I, 947-8), where Lemnians are entered under their Athenian tribes : cf. also Thuc., III. 5.1., IV. 28.4, V. 8.2., VII. 57.2 for Lemnians and Imbrians serving with the Athenian forces.

[24] Plut., *Pericles*, 11 ; the colony of Brea was limited by decree to *zeugitae* and *thetes* (Tod, *Greek Hist. Inscr.*, I. 44). When a *zeugites* had several sons, some would apply for allotments, as otherwise the property divided between them would not suffice to maintain their zeugite rank, and all would sink to *thetes*.

[25] The Solonian qualification for zeugite status was land producing 200 measures of grain, wine or oil (Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 7.4). It is believed that this was at an early date converted into money (thus enabling other than agricultural income to be included) at the Solonian rate of one drachma for the measure (Plut., *Solon*, 23) ; this hypothesis is supported by the rental value of the allotments at Lesbos (see Note 27). By the fourth-century at any rate the Solonial classes were based on a capital assessment (Isaeus, VII. 39), which would include personal as well as real property. It is probable that the capital was reckoned as ten times the income ; when Antipater in 322 B.C. limited political rights to those owning property to the value of 2,000 drachmae (Diodorus, XVIII. 18), he was probably reviving the hoplite franchise which had been favoured by some Athenian oligarchs in 411 (Thuc., VIII. 97.1., Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 33.1).

[26] Harpocration, s.v. θῆτες (citing Aristophanes), cf. Thuc., III. 16.1, VI. 43, VIII. 24.2.

[27] Thuc., III. 50.2.

[28] The recorded figures are for cleruchies : 1,000 to the Chersonnese (Plut., *Pericles*, 11, 19 ; Diod., XI. 88), 750 to Naxos and Andros (Plut., *Pericles*, 11 ; Diod., XI. 88, speaks of 1,000 to Naxos and elsewhere, including probably Euboea), 2,000 to Chalcis (Aelian, *V.H.*, VI. 1), 2,700 to Lesbos (Thuc., III. 50.2). For colonies : to Hestiaea either 1,000 (Diod., XII. 22) or 2,000 (Theopompus, *FGH*, II. 115, fr. 387), to Brea 1,000 (Plut., *Pericles*, 11), to Potidaea 1,000 (Diod., XII. 46), to Melos 500 (Thuc., V. 116.4). There were also cleruchies of unrecorded size, but certainly considerable, to Scyros, Lemnos and Imbros, and colonies to Aegina, and probably to Erythrae, Colophon and Astacus, not to speak of places outside the limits of the Athenian empire (Amisus, Sinope) and the large colonies of Thurii and Amphipolis, where the Athenian settlers were in a minority. For the distinction between colonies and cleruchies see *Ath. Trib. Lists*, III, pp. 282-97).

[29] e.g. Thuc., VII. 57.2 (Lemnian and Imbrian cleruchs and Aeginetan and Hestiaean colonists serve in the Sicilian expedition.

[30] Plut., *Pericles*, 11.

[31] Thuc., II, 13.8.

[32] Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 24.3.

[33] Thuc., III. 17.4, VI. 8.1, 31.3. After the Sicilian disaster the rate had to be cut to 3 obols owing to lack of funds (Thuc., VIII. 45.2).

[34] See Tod, *Greek Hist. Inscr.*, 1.53.

[35] Plut., *Pericles*, 12.

[36] Thuc., II. 13.3., Tod, *op. cit.*, I. 64.

[37] Herod., VIII. 44.

[38] Herod., VIII. 1.

[39] Herod., IX. 28.

[40] Nepos, *Miltiades*, 5. Suidas, s.v. Ἱππίας (citing Ephorus).

[41] Herod., V. 97, VIII, 65. Aristophanes (*Eccl.*, 1133) also gives this figure, though by this time (393-1) it was probably no longer true ; he also (*Wasps*, 709) speaks of δύο μυριάδες τῶν δημοτικῶν (i.e. *thetes*) in 422.

[42] Thucydides (II. 13. 6 and 8) states that in 431 B.C. there were 13,000 citizen hoplites and 1,200 cavalry in the field army, and 16,000, comprising the youngest and oldest citizens and all metic hoplites, in the garrison army (Diod., XII. 40, using Ephorus, gives 12,000 and 17,000 respectively) : he also says (II. 31) that in the same year 10,000 citizen hoplites and 3,000 metic hoplites invaded the Megarid, while there were 3,000 citizen hoplites besieging Potidaea. From the gross total of 30,000 one must deduct (*a*) the 3,000 metics who (by exception) was called up for the Megarian expedition (*b*) other metics, who by age would be unsuited for field service : these by analogy with the citizen figures would be about another 3,000 (*c*) the 18 and 19 age groups

(Thucydides' νεώτατοι), who are excluded from all the other figures under discussion. These age groups would, as the mortality rate was high in the ancient world, and the successive age groups therefore tapered off sharply, be large, and would account perhaps for 3,000.

[43] Cleruchs (as opposed to colonists) served in the Athenian army (see Note 23) and would have been entered in the official muster rolls (κατάλογοι) from which Thucydides drew his statistics. By this date some 4,000 cleruchs had been despatched to the Chersonnese, Naxos, Andros, Chalcis; and Scyros, Lemnos and Imbros might account for another 3,000 (see Note 28).

[44] Thuc., I. 121.3, 143.1, VII. 13.2., 63-4.

[45] Plut., *Pericles*, 11.

[46] Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 24. 3, Thuc., II. 13.8.

[47] Thuc., IV. 101.2.

[48] id., V. 11.2.

[49] id., VI. 43, VII. 16.2, 20.2, 42.1.

[50] id., III. 87.3.

[51] Lysias, XX. 13, ὑμῶν ψηφισαμένων πεντακισχιλίοις παραδοῦναι τὰ πράγματα καταλογεὺς ὢν ἐννακισχιλίους κατέλεξεν: cf. Thuc., VIII. 97.1, τοῖς πεντακιοχιλίοις ἐψηφίσαντο τὰ πράγματα παραδοῦναι (εἶναι δ' αὐτῶν ὁπόσοι καὶ ὅπλα παρέχονται).

[52] Diod., XVIII. 18.5, Plut., *Phocion*, 28. Diodorus gives 22,000 *thetes*, Plutarch 12,000. I accept Plutarch's figure because it agrees with the census of Demetrius of Phaleron, which gave 21,000 citizens in 317-07 (Athenaeus, VI. 272c), and with a contemporary orator's estimate of 20,000 citizens ([Dem.], XXV. 50). See also next note.

[53] A. Hoplites and cavalry. The Athenians put 6,600 men into the field in 394 (Xen., *Hell.*, IV. ii. 17), 6,000 in 362 (Diod., XV. 84), 5,400 in 352 (Diod. XVI. 37) and 5,500 in 323 (Diod., XVIII. 10-11); the last force consisted of the 20-40 age groups from 7 out of the 10 tribes. B. Thetes. In 351 the Athenians proposed to call up the age groups 20-45 to man 40 triremes (Dem., III. 4), for which 8,000 men would be required.

[54] See Gilbert, *Greek Const. Ant.*, pp. 176-83, Busolt-Swoboda, *Griech. Staatskunde*, II, pp. 984-6. The minor role played by the merchant class in Athenian politics is explained partly because so many merchants were metics, partly because merchants were mostly humble folk, owning little more than their one ship, and operating on capital borrowed on its security and that of their cargo.

[55] Xen., *Mem.*, II. viii. 1-5.

[56] Isaeus, V. 39, εἰς δὲ τοὺς μισθωτοὺς ἴοντας δι' ἔνδειαν τῶν ἐπιτηδείων, Isocr., XIV. 48, ἄλλους δ' ἐπὶ θήτειαν ἴοντες, τοὺς δ' ὅπως ἕκαστοι δύνανται τὰ καθ ἡμέραν ποριζόμενοι.

[57] Xen., *Mem.*, II. v. 2., Dem., XXXVI. 28-9, 43.

[58] Plato., *Rep.*, 565a.

[59] Xen., *Mem.*, III. vii, 6.

[60] Arist., *Pol.*, IV. iv. 1 (1291b).

[61] Lysias, V. 5.

[62] e.g. the poor citizen, Choerylus, who is the hero of the *Plutus*, has a stock comic slave, Carion. In the *Ecclesiazusae* no slaves appear in the earlier part of the play when the women steal their husbands' clothes and the husbands subsequently wake up and have to put on their wives' clothes, but at the end a slave girl of Praxagora suddenly appears to do a comic turn. Yet Praxagora's communist programme includes μηδ' ἀνδραπόδοις τὸν μὲν χρῆσθαι πολλοῖς, τὸν δ' οὐδ' ἀκολούθῳ, and she surely belongs to the second class.

[63] Thuc., III. 17.4.

[64] Thuc., VII. 75.5, implies that most of the attendants of the Athenian cavalrymen and hoplites at Syracuse were slaves.

[65] Thuc., IV. 101.2. In Isaeus, V. 11, Dicaeogenes is reproached for sending a poor relation, whom he has defrauded of his inheritance, to serve his brother ἀντ' ἀκολούθου at Corinth (probably in the Corinthian war).

[66] Dem., XXIV. 197, θύρας ἀφαιρεῖν καὶ στρώμαθ' ὑποσπᾶν καὶ διάκονον, ἴ τις ἔχρητο, ταύτην ἐνεχυράζειν.

[67] For the trierarchy there were 20 symmories comprising in all 1,200 persons i.e. 60 per symmory (Dem., XIV. 15-16). For the war tax there were also symmories, which probably numbered 100; for Cleidemus (Photius, s.v. ναυκραρία) speaks of 100 symmories, which can only be those related to the war tax, and the war tax was collected by the 300 προεισφέροντες (Dem., XLII. 25) who are probably idential with the ἡγεμόνες, δεύτεροι and τρίτοι of the symmories (Dem., XVIII. 103, cf. Dinarchus, *c. Dem.*, 42, Aesch. *in Ctes.*, 222).

[68] Phaenippus (Dem., XLII. 5) is the only recorded owner of one large estate. Apollodorus owned land in 3 demes (Dem., L. 8); Timocrates' father in four places (Aesch., *c. Tim.*, 97 and 101); Theopompus in two places (Isaeus, XI. 44); Timotheus (Dem., XLIX. 11) and the speaker of Lysias, VII (cf. 4-11 and 24) in two or more.

[69] Lysias, VII. 9-10, Isaeus, XI. 42. The metics who are described as γεωργοί in Tod, *Greek Hist. Inscr.*, II. 100, are probably tenant farmers (they could not be owners of land), though they might be agricultural labourers. Cf. Xen., *Symp.*, VIII. 25, on bad farming by tenants.

[70] Lysias, IV. 1, VII. 16, 34., Dem., XLVII. 53, LIII. 6. The freedmen who describe themselves as γεωργοί in *IG*², II. 1553-78 (see Gomme, *Population of Ath.*, pp. 41-3 for an analysis) were probably formerly agricultural slaves, now labourers or tenants. The ἄγροικος in Theophrastus (*Char.*, IV. 5.) discusses politics with his agricultural οἰκέται and μισθωτοί.

[71] Dem., LIII. 19-21.

[72] Dem., LVII. 45.

[73] Dem., XLVII. 52, Isaeus, VI. 33.

[74] Lysias, XX. 11.

[75] Dem., XXII. 65 = XXIV. 172, οἱ γεωργοῦντες καὶ φειδόμενοι, διὰ παιδοτροφίας δὲ καὶ οἰκεῖα ἀναλώματα καὶ λητουργίας ἑτέρας ἐκλελοιπότας εἰσφοράν. The liturgies here referred to cannot be the state liturgies, which fell on a relatively wealthy class, but those of the demes (Isaeus, II. 42, *IG*²,I. 186-7B, II-III, 1178, 1198, 1200).

[76] *Pol.*, 1323a, cf. 1252b, ὁ γὰρ βοῦς αὐτ' οἰκέτου τοῖς πένησίν ἐστιν.

[77] It was inferred by Boeckh from Dem., XXVII. 7, XXVIII. 4, XXIX. 59, where 25 minae is stated or assumed to be the unit of assessment for εἰσφορά, that this was the minimum sum chargeable. As there were 9,000 citizens owning over 20 minae (see notes 50-1) there might reasonably be 6,000 owning over 25 minae.

[78] Dem., XXI. 83, 95.

[79] Lysias, XVI. 14.

[80] For the price of land see Lysias, XIX. 29 and 42; it works out at about 90 drachmae the *plethron*, or about 400 the acre. Rents are reckoned at about 8% of capital value in Isaeus, XI. 42 and *IG*², II-III, 2496. For the cost of living see note 1. The poor farmers in Aristophanes' *Plutus* (223-4) are represented as working in the fields themselves.

[81] Xen., *Vect.*, iv. 14-15. Xenophon was writing over two generations later, quoting popular report, which may well have exaggerated Nicias' wealth (cf. Lysias, XIX. 47).

[83] Dem., XXXVII. 4.

[83] Lysias, XII. 19.

[84] Dem., XXXVI. 11; Demosthenes' 32-3 knifemakers brought in half a talent a year (Dem., XXVII. 9). See Dem., XXXVI. 5, for Pasion's land.

[85] Dem., XXVII. 9-11.

[86] [Plut.], *Vit. X Orat.*, *Isocrates* (*Mor.*, 836e).

[87] Xen., *Mem.*, II. vii. 3-6.

[88] Xen., *Mem.*, III. xi. 4.

[89] Aesch., *C. Tim.*, 97.

[90] Lycurgus, *c. Leostr.*, 23, 58; Demosthenes (XXVII. 9) reckons his skilled knifemakers at 3 minae a head at the lowest.

[91] Isaeus, VIII. 35.

[92] Isaeus, VI. 19, 20, 33-34.

[93] Xen., *Mem.*, II. iii.3, οἰκέτας μὲν οἱ δυνάμενοι ὠνοῦνται ἵνα συνέργους ἔχωσιν.

[94] Lysias, XXIV. 6, τέχνην δὲ κέκτημαι βραχέα δυναμένην ὠφελεῖν, ἣν αὐτὸς μὲν ἥδη χαλεπῶς ἐργάζομαι, τὸν διαδεξόμενον δ' αὐτὴν οὔπω δύναμαι κτήσασθαι.

[95] Suidas, s.v. ἀποψηφίσεις (453 B).

[96] Ath., VI. 272c.

[97] *die Bevölkerung der Griechisch-Römischen Welt.* pp. 84-99, cf. also R. L. Sargent, *The size of the slave population at Athens during the fifth and fourth centuries* B.C., and W. L. Westermann, "Athenaeus and the slaves of Athens," *Athenian Studies presented to W. S. Ferguson.*

[98] Thuc., VII. 27.5. The figure must be an estimate, but even Thucydides' estimates are worthy of serious consideration. He implies that this loss was a very serious matter for the Athenians, i.e., that 20,000 was a substantial proportion of the total slave population.

[99] Xen., *Vect.*, iv. 25.

[100] Xen., *Vect.*, iv.22, πολλοὶ δ' εἰσὶ καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις ὑπηρέτων, πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ ἄλλοι καὶ Ἀθηναῖοι καὶ ξένοι οἳ τῷ σώματι μὲν οὔτε βούλοιντ' ἂν οὔτε δύναιντ' ἂν ἐργάζεσθαι, τῇ δὲ γνώμῃ ἐπιμελόμενοι ἡδέως ἂν τὰ ἐπιτήδεια πορίζοιντο.

[101] Dem., XLII. 20, πολλὰ ἐκ τῶν ἔργων τῶν ἀργυρείων ἐγώ, Φαίνιππε, πρότερον αὐτὸς τῷ ἐμαυτοῦ σώματι πονῶν καὶ ἐργαζόμενος συνελεξάμην.

[102] Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 62.3.

[103] Dem., XIII. 2, 10.

[104] Gilbert, *Greek Const. Ant.*, pp. 173-4.

[105] op. cit. p. 229

[106] Xen., *Vect.*, iv.25.

[107] The evidence is fully set out and analysed by Margaret Crosby in *Hesperia*, 1950, pp. 189 ff.

[108] Suidas, s.v. ἀγράφων μετάλλων δίκη.

[109] Xen., *Hell.*, I. vi.24. Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 693-4.

[110] Arist., *Ath. Pol.*, 40.2.

[111] [Plut.], *Vit. X Orat.*, *Hypereides* (*Mor.*, 849a).

[112] [Xen.], *Ath. Pol.*, i. 10.

[113] Xen., *Hell.*, II. iii. 48.

[114] Plato, *Rep.*, 563b.

Capitalism—What's in a Name?

R H. Hilton

THE HISTORY OF CAPITALISM WAS ONCE STUDIED BY ITS SUPPORTERS and its critics on the basis of reasonably common agreement as to what both meant by the term.

" The subject of capitalism " wrote Professor M. M. Postan[1]; " owes its present place in political and scientific discussion to the work of Marx and the Marxians." Many historians substantially follow him. Mr. E. Lipson in his *Economic History of England*[2] on the whole adopts Marx's definition of Capitalism. He agrees that its essential feature is the division of classes between propertyless wage-earners and entrepreneurs who own capital, in contrast to the characteristic medieval organisation of industry and agriculture on the basis of the small producer who owned his own means of production.

Definitions, both implicit and explicit, which are much less precise have become fashionable in recent years. A characteristic definition is given by Professor Pirenne describing " the tendency to the steady accumulation of wealth which we call capitalism."[3] Two leading French historians refer to capitalists and capitalism when writing of large scale landed property in the Carolingian era.[4] And it is surely a looser definition than that of Marx which leads Professor Armando Sapori, the historian of Italian industry and commerce in the middle ages, to write of a ' capitalist revolution ' in the time of Thomas Aquinas.[5]

Pirenne's definition referred to the activities of European merchants in the 12th and 13th centuries. Such definitions face the history teacher and student with the puzzling phenomenon of ' the rise of the middle classes ' (associated of course with the growth of trade), which seems to start so early, to go on for so long, and to be the explanation of so many different historical movements and events. For although the urban middle class of medieval Europe is said to have begun its notorious career as early as the 10th century,[6] the teacher is faced with the problem of explaining why it was not until the 17th and 18th centuries that this class became the dominant force in society. Why did it take more than 700 years to reach this position if during the whole period it was ' rising ' ?

Not all historians equate the expansion of a class based on trade in a predominantly agricultural society with the expansion of capitalism. Nevertheless the assumption that the two movements were identical is generally made. It is made with care and reservations by the specialists, but usually more unreservedly by those who feel it necessary to simplify for general teaching purposes. The latter do in fact get plenty of justification from some of the eminent specialists writing on medieval trade. For example, Professor de Roover, an outstanding contributor to our knowledge of medieval banking, speaks of the ' commercial revolution at the end of the 13th century ' which paved the way for ' mercantile capitalism, which in most European countries was not replaced by industrial capitalism before the middle of the 19th century.'[7] And most of the contemporary contributions by historians of medieval industry and commerce rest on the (usually implicit) assumption that what is being discussed is ' capitalism.'

Recent researches have shown that an older generation of economic historians who regarded the middle ages as a period of ' natural economy ' were mistaken. These historians minimised the extent to which commodities were produced for the market. They also under-estimated the volume of international trade and the repercussions which it had on economic activity. Pirenne, both in his studies of the growth of medieval towns and in his more general works[8] has had a considerable influence on the teaching and study of medieval economic history. He emphasised that the growth of international trade played a key role in the transformation of feudal society. Many current assumptions about medieval capitalism are derived from his work, and his conclusions have been supported by a number of subsequent studies. Only a few need be mentioned here. The most important have been those which have explored the development of trade and industry in the most advanced economic regions of medieval Europe — Flanders and Italy. The researches of Espinas have shown how great was the industrial activity of the Flemish cloth manufacturing centres, adding detailed material to illustrate the more general remarks of Pirenne. Doren, Davidsohn, Sapori and others have shown how the industrial and commercial activity of the Tuscan towns was even further advanced than that of Flanders.[9] These centres were producing cloth for an international market. They bought their raw material far from the place of manufacture. Wool was imported from England, Spain and elsewhere. Dyestuffs were brought from as far afield as the Black Sea. Naturally this shipment of raw materials and the export of finished goods brought into being an elaborate trading mechanism. Up to the end of the 13th century, the great fairs of Champagne formed the greatest among a number of international emporia where buyers from the south met sellers from the north. In the 14th century merchant importers (Italians especially) established

permanent agencies in the manufacturing and trading centres. To avoid the transport of bullion and to overcome the difficulties of currency exchange in coin, letters of exchange were elaborated. This permitted the development of credit not to speak of facilitating large and small scale usury and international public finance.[10]

Investigations which revealed the importance of international trade have been accompanied by studies of agrarian life which again have corrected the older impression of a world composed of closed 'natural' economies. The disintegration, from the 11th century onwards of the big estates of the Carolingian era, the sub-division of manorial demesnes, the reduction in the numbers of completely servile peasants and the growth of rent paid in money, rather than in labour or in kind, have been described in works written half a century and more ago.[11] Since then economic historians have tended to link up these features more definitely with the contemporary commercial expansion. Yet less detailed study has been made of the market aspects of agriculture than of industry or trade. One reason for this is that evidence for production for the market in agriculture is comparatively scanty, except for England. The break-up of the big landlord estates was delayed longer in England than France and Western Germany; and so they were the main participants in market production when the demand came, above all in the 13th century. Consequently records of this production for the market have survived in England, as they have not on the continent. Annual manorial and central estate accounts dating from about the middle of the 13th century exist in abundance. But although many valuable monographs concerning individual estates have been written, comparatively little systematic investigation of the exact scope of production for the market has been undertaken.[12] Even so, one modern historian at least has concluded that the 13th century English estates were examples of agricultural capitalism.[13]

There is clearly no little confusion in the study of early forms of capitalism. It is therefore well to look back to what Marx understood by the word. He used it to denote what he described as a 'mode of production' of the material wealth of society. He believed that social and political institutions, the ideas and achievements of any society ultimately derive from its 'mode of production.' He therefore saw the heart of the change from feudal to capitalist society in the change from a primarily agrarian society of petty producers, whose most important social classes were the landlords and their unfree tenants, to a society producing commodities for exchange on the market, whose principal classes were capital-owning entrepreneurs and propertyless wage-earners.

Marx' general views are well enough known, and his chapters on the 'primitive accumulation of capital' in Vol. I of 'Capital' (Part VIII) are familiar to most economic historians. But of more special interest to the medievalist are three chapters of Vol. III[14],

which summarise his less well-known views on the genesis of capitalism.

His main argument is that commerce, in money or goods, however widespread, and however productive of accumulations of money capital, does not *by itself* transform feudal society. The speed and forms of the disintegration of feudal society, on the contrary, ' depend(ed) on its solidity and internal articulation ' as a ' mode of production.' It was rather the inherent contradictions within the society than the impact upon it (as from without) of commerce which were the prime causes of its downfall.

In his view, the only form of capital in the ancient and medieval world was the money capital accumulated by merchants and usurers. The typical medieval capitalist was the merchant who drew his profit from the monopoly of the carrying trade between economically backward and geographically remote areas. This profit might be derived from the import of articles of small bulk and high prices (such as spices) from the east ; or from the exploitation of the different prices of commodities of everyday consumption as between one local market area and another. The usurer's profit also depended on the backward, rather than on the advanced features of the economy. It was drawn from the extravagance of the landowning classes, and from the perpetual bankruptcy of the peasant and the small artisan. It is only when capital ' takes hold of production ' that merchant's and usurer's capital becomes subordinate to industrial capital, and only then that it becomes possible to speak of a capitalist ' mode of production.'

This attitude to medieval money capital led Marx to view with scepticism the claim that the growth of money rent in itself had any direct connection with the decay of feudal relationships. He distinguished ' feudal rent ' from capitalist ground rent with the same care that he distinguished merchant from industrial capital. The ' feudal rent,' paid by the peasant to the landowner, whether in labour, kind or money, is analogous to the ' surplus-value ' which the capitalist derives from the wage earner. Ground rent under capitalism is not the main source of the income of the ruling class. It is merely a ' super-profit,' derived by the landlord from the capitalist farmer by virtue of his monopoly of a force of nature, the land.

Marx emphasised the corrosive effect of money on the economy of feudal society, whilst he also pointed to some of the retrograde effects of the action of merchants' and usurers' capital. In the cloth industry, the domination of merchants' capital simply deteriorated the conditions of the artisans, so that in some respects they were worse off than the wage earners. Usury, especially in the countryside, caused a depression without altering the character of existing society. " The indebted feudal lord becomes even more oppressive, because he is himself more oppressed." But Marx

regarded the growth of merchants' capital as one of the preconditions of the capitalist mode of production.

The most important of these pre-conditions, especially for the development of capitalist industry, was the concentration of moneyed wealth. In agriculture, the development of money rent assisted the stratification of the rural population, and the growth of capitalist farming. When money rent replaced labour rent, the peasants were able to devote all their time to their own holdings, and the richer among them were able to accumulate surpluses. The poorer peasants, on the other hand, were ruined by the effect of continuous demand for money rent, and by usury. When the rent from land was expressed in money, it became possible to put a money price to the land. This promoted the buying and selling of land ; and, as more land came on to the market, the resulting disintegration of traditional holdings further assisted the social differentiation of the peasantry.

The test of any such analysis is not whether or no it sounds convincing, but whether it helps to interpret the facts and solve some of the problems which confront the historian of the middle ages. One of the foremost among such problems is how far older forms of economic structure and social organisation persisted, and how far they remained dominant.

The main new developments in the agrarian life of the later middle ages in Western Europe are well enough known. The legal claims of the lords over the persons of their tenants were reduced ; a majority of tenants were freed from the obligation to labour on their lord's demesene ; money rent predominated ; and the total amount of rent paid over to the landlords decreased. In short, the landlords' control over their peasantry was weakened. Ignoring for the moment the exact relationship between these new developments and increased market production, let us briefly consider how far they involved a fundamental change in the character of society. The big demesnes tended to disappear or to shrink, but they had never constituted more than a fraction of the land under cultivation nor did the techniques used on them differ significantly from those which the peasant used on their own plots. Small scale peasant production continued as before. It is true that, from the 14th century onward, a number of richer peasants, and, a little higher in the social hierarchy, many of the lesser nobility, were beginning to farm on a larger scale. Both needed a certain amount of wage labour. But the amount was not yet enough to change the old system. Furthermore, although a landlord-tenant relationship based on the payment of money rent can be seen in the light of later events to have been an important transitional stage in the decline of medieval agriculture, the main features of feudalism persisted. The landlords continued to take rent from peasants by non-economic compulsion.[15] The peasants handed over to their lords a portion of their surplus under the same sort of

legal and military sanctions as before (though the growth of the state machine made them much more efficient). The fact that the surplus had to be converted by the peasant into money instead of being rendered directly in labour or in kind did not *yet* alter the class relations.

Small scale production operated also in industry. It was a great change when to the activities of the scattered artisans in the villages was added the productive effort of large numbers or workshops concentrated in towns and organised in gilds. This was part of the general economic expansion of the 12th and 13th centuries. In certain centres producing for export, primarily cloth, groups of wealthy merchants seized hold of both ends of the process of production the provision of raw material, and the marketing of the finished product. In so doing they destroyed the independence of the artisan. But the big merchants of Douai, Ghent or Florence did not revolutionise production. Although some centralisation of the preparation and finishing processes was achieved, the greater part of the work of manufacture was done in the family workshops of the master craftsmen. Furthermore although a proletarian labour force of some dimensions existed in both the Flemish and Italian cloth centres, they were normally concentrated in groups of no more than four or five apiece in the central warehouses of the merchants. For the most part they were employed in the artisan workshops by the master craftsmen, by whose side they worked.[16]

In some respects the big merchants actually retarded the development of production. They were afraid of production for the market by the artisans themselves. Consequently they forbade any collusion between artisans at different stages of the production process. If weavers passed their product straight on to the fullers and dyers, there was risk to the merchant that an element among the craftsmen might control the process of production from within. This almost happened in Flanders in the 14th century. When the political power of the old merchant-draper patrician caste was broken, the weavers of towns such as Ghent threw up an entrepreneur element which would have taken over the organisation of the industry, had not political factors, the rise of the country industry and the decay of the Flemish cloth industry prevented them.[17] It was to avoid this that in Northern Europe and in Italy, the merchants supplying the raw materials insisted that after the completion of each stage of the production process, the product should be brought back to the central warehouse for re-issue to the next craftsman in the chain. Whilst the artisan remained subordinated to the merchant in this fashion, no change in the traditional smallscale methods of production was possible.

As in agriculture, so in industry and finance, there was conservatism as well as change. Great concentrations of merchant capital and elaborate credit and exchange mechanisms were a new feature of the

13th and 14th centuries. They arose when European industrial exports restored the balance of trade between Western Europe and the East.[18] The human agents of this development were those great merchants of whom the Italian bankers were the finest flower. Yet, in spite of their seeming power as international financiers, they adapted themselves like their ancestors of the 11th and 12th centuries to the existing social structure. The very diversity of their interests as bankers, money lenders, and traders, in any and every commodity, made them the more adaptable, both politically and socially, to the feudal ruling circles. For these rulers were their principal market for their luxury commodities, the recipients of private and government loans.

Old methods and old relations of production must be emphasised. But there were none the less very great changes within medieval Europe between the 11th and 15th centuries. Without these changes, subsequent development would have been impossible. The point is that *in spite of* the expansion of production, of population and of trade in the 13th and early 14th centuries, the main features of the old social and political framework remained, not to disappear until the 17th and 18th centuries. Of course, forms of government and social relations did change greatly during the middle ages. But the states of Europe continued to be ruled by and for territorial aristocracies represented by feudal monarchies. They were not ruled by or for merchants or industrialists. That is why there had to be bourgeois revolutions before the full expansion of capitalism was possible. Our insistence on the persistence of the old structure in industry and agriculture has been to show the economic basis for the continued dominance of the old classes. This is one reason why an uncritical acceptance of the view that capitalism gradually expanded from the 13th century onwards may lead to a falsification of the real history of capitalism as well as of the preceding epoch.

It follows from the line of criticism outlined above that a changed direction of research into capitalist origins is needed. This does not minimise the great value of work done by the various specialists in the history of commerce, banking and industry. The point is that a number of questions with which the contemporary historians have not dealt remain to be answered.[19]

In order to promote the solution of the problems both of the chronology of capitalism and of its earliest characteristics, an approach might be made under two main heads. First a chronology of the *predominating* methods and relations of production should be established, and co-ordinated with the much better known chronology of the growth of commerce. Secondly, the inter-relationships of the economic, social and political aspects of society should be studied. In particular, the significance and consequences of the unevennesses in the development of these varied sides of human life require investigation.

We are likely to obtain the truest insight into the end of feudal and the beginning of capitalist society if we pay attention first to the techniques and relations of production. Naturally the commercial expansion of the Middle Ages must be examined in the closest association with the investigation of changes in the mode of production. But the history of trade alone will not tell us how and when the characteristic relations of feudalism gave place to those of capitalism, how peasant agriculture and artisan industry gave place to large concentrations of capital and of wage labourers, profit by rent to profit drawn from the value given to the finished product by the worker.

Political conditions need closer attention. The political structure and political movements ultimately arise out of the social relations based on production, but economic and political changes do not develop hand in hand. Though they develop unevenly, they are integrally connected. It is not possible to talk of a capitalist *society* when political power is still in the hands of a feudal aristocracy. It is unwise to speak of a capitalist system when the political and legal superstructure of society is still one shaped by pre-capitalist economic conditions. Political power, even in the hands of a ruling class whose economic basis is decaying can still retard the development of new economic and social forms. The history of England under the Tudors and Stuarts and of central and eastern Europe in the 19th century illustrates this point.

What kind of problems demand the attention of the research historian? The growth of capitalist production cannot be measured simply by estimating the level of commodity production. . Developments in technique, the growth of the volume of total production, and the manner of application of labour to production also require study. These problems are common to both agriculture and industry; indeed it must not be imagined that in studying capitalist origins, attention should primarily be concentrated on industry. The history of England up to the revolution of 1640 would be but half told if it ignored the growth of capitalism in agriculture.

Questions of technique ought not to be considered simply as problems of technological evolution. What matters is their economic and social effects. One of the main obstacles to the accumulation and investment of capital was the small-scale of the units of production in agriculture and industry. Therefore one of the central problems for the student of capitalist origins is to find out about the number, size and methods of operation of the larger farms held in the late 14th and 15th centuries by the thriving elements in the country-side — the big peasants and the smaller gentry. All that we yet know about such farming units is that they were considerably larger than the traditional average peasant holding of the 13th century, being often more than 100 acres in arable area; that they were heterogeneous in composition, including the farmer's ancestral

holding, fragments of other peasants' lapsed holdings, and leased-out demesne ; and that they must have required hired labour for working them. We also need to know more about the chronology and scope of the turn-over to sheep farming for wool production. It is probable that in the middle of the 15th century England was producing less wool than at the beginning of the 14th century.[20] Yet there has been much loose writing about England being ' covered . . . with sheep farms in place of corn fields.[21]

Problems of size of farms and type of farming immediately raise the question of the agrarian labour force of the later middle ages. Was there a proportionate decline or increase in the number of wage labourers in the country-side after the middle of the 14th century ? In a recent article[22] Professor Postan has challenged the usual view that wage labour increased in importance during the period. From figures of rising real wages, he deduces a decline in the numbers of wage earners compared with other sections of the population. Landless labourers and small-holders were able, he believes, to move after the Black Death into the vacated holdings of victims of the plague. But who provided the labour on the enlarged holdings of the top stratum of the villeins, the yeomen and the lesser gentry ? Whilst 14th and 15th century rentals and surveys confirm that the small-holding class had diminished relatively to other peasant groups, this type of evidence is naturally useless for estimating the number of totally landless. The best English evidence bearing on the subject is not entirely reliable. This is the Poll Tax return of 1381. Unlike earlier returns it gives the occupations of practically all of the taxed personnel. The lists are very incomplete, for there was a mass evasion of the assessors.[23]

But those who hid and were not counted were more likely to be the landless than those whose houses and holdings could not be concealed. The returns are therefore likely to minimise rather than to exaggerate the proportion of wage workers. Such returns as have been examined show a surprisingly high proportion of wage workers, but much further investigation of the returns needs to be done before any firm conclusions can be reached.[24]

An estimate of the amount of wage labour in the late middle ages gives more than an indication of the growth of capitalist social relations. It is in addition indirect evidence for production for the market. As the peasants became landless, they not only became labourers. They became consumers with an income entirely in the form of wages (not all, but mostly money) who needed to buy in the market the goods which previously had not gone through the market.[25] The quantitative significance of the home market in early times is so difficult to measure that international trade (for which there is much better evidence in the form of customs and toll figures) tends to dominate our ideas about production for the market to the exclusion of a sufficient consideration of internal demand.[26] Furthermore.

in order to estimate the significance of the production of commodities for the home market in its relation to the productive system as a whole, it is advisable to attempt an estimate of the relative quantities of goods produced for direct use and for the market. A useful addition to what we already know about regional variations in English history would be a survey of how much of the total peasant product in different districts was consumed by the producer, how much went on to the market, and how much was left to spend when the rent was paid.

Some of these considerations apply also to industry. Here too the size and nature of the productive unit is of great importance. The continuing organisation of production on the basis of the artisan family unit prevented the development of capitalist relations of production. But simply to estimate the distance travelled on the road to capitalism from this factor alone would be insufficient. One of the most fruitful ways of tackling the problems of the earliest stages of capitalism in industry would be to compare the history of the cloth manufacture in medieval Flanders and Central Italy with that of England in the 16th and 17th centuries.[27] The concentration of capital and labour, the organisation of the supply of raw material, and of the sale of the finished product by capitalists in the Flemish and Italian towns at the end of the 13th and beginning of the 14th centuries was such that one could almost say that here were societies trembling on the brink of the capitalist mode of production. Yet modern capitalism derived its initial impetus from the English textile industry and does not descend directly from the principal medieval centres. Its foundations were laid in the rural domestic industry which had fled from the traditional urban centres. We know of course that gild restrictionism was one reason for the shift in the centre of gravity from town to country. But this is only one of many aspects of the problem.

One of the principal attractions in studying the failure of medieval Flanders or Italy to develop the capitalist mode of production is that it not only permits, but demands, the widest treatment. The problem is insoluble on the basis of a narrow concentration on technical and economic factors, for social and political developments were all important. How different were the Boinebrokes of Douai and the Bardi and the Acciaiuoli of Florence from the English entrepreneurs of the 17th century! These earlier capitalists had unspecialised commercial interests; they had close financial associations with the leading feudalists; they were disinclined to invest in industrial or agricultural production; they were so enmeshed in the political and social relationships of European fuedalism that no break through to a new form of society was to be expected under their leadership. In Flanders at the beginning of the 14th century they lined up with the king of France and the feudal nobility against the urban craftsmen and the peasants. In 14th century Florence,

the classic pattern of the bourgeois revolution in its least heroic aspects is anticipated like the spectre of the future — the bourgeoisie allying itself to its defeated feudal enemies out of fear of the workers and artisans, and in so doing destroying its own future as a class.[28]

To use Marx' phrade, the ' solidity and internal articulation ' of feudal society was still sufficient, even during this period of economic and political crisis, to prevent the new mode of production from establishing itself. But exactly how and why is a matter for further investigation.

It is not enough to study capital, wage labour, and units of production in their economic aspects. Since men make their own history, the historian must know what part the political and social consciousness of the various classes played in advancing or retarding the tempo of capitalist development. Since that consciousness is by no means a direct reflection of the economic activity of these classes, the historian cannot but concern himself with law politics, art and religion. Neither feudalism nor capitalism are understandable simply as phases in economic history. Society and its movement must be examined in their totality, for otherwise the significance of uneven developments, and of contradictions, between the economic foundation of society, and its ideas and institutions, cannot be appreciated. A failure to appreciate their significance is fatal not only to the understanding of the growth and final victory of the capitalist mode of production, but to an insight into the principle motive force of all human development.

NOTES

[1] *Economic History Review*, 4. A thorough discussion of the uses of the term will be found in M. H. Dobb, *Studies of the Development of Capitalism*, Chapter I.

[2] *Economic History of England*, passim, but cf. e.g. p. 468.

[3] *Belgian Democracy*, p. 30.

[4] L. Halphen, *Etudes critiques sur l'histoire de Charlemagnn*, p. 265. J. Calmette, *Le Moyen Age*, p. 135.

[5] ' Il giusto prezzo nella dottrina di San Tomasso,' in *Studi di Storia Economica Medioevale*, 1946, p. 191 ; cf. p. 698.

[6] See ' The Tenth Century ' by the Abbé Lestocquoy, *Economic History Review*, XVII, 1.

[7] *Money, Banking and Credit in Medieval Bruges*, p. 11.

[8] *Medieval Cities* ; *Histoire de Belgique* ; *Social and Economic History of Medieval Europe* ; *Mahomet and Charlemagne.*

[9] G. Espinas, *La Vie Urbaine de Douai au Moyen-Age* ; *Sire Jehan Boinebroke* (Les Origines du Capitalisme) ; *Histoire de la Draperie de la Flandre Francaise.* A. Doren, *Florentiner Wollentuchindustrie.* R. Davidsohn, *Geschichte von Florenz* IV. A. Sapori, *op. cit.*

[10] Besides the works of Sapori and de Roover already quoted, see R. Doehaerd, *Les Relations Commerciales entre Gênes et l'Outremont*, I. and Y. Renouard, *Les Hommes d'Affaires Italiens* ; also his *Relations des Papes d'Avignon et des Compagnes Commerciales et Bancaires.*

[11] e.g. L. Delisle, *Etudes sur la Condition de la Classe Agricole en Normandie au Moyen-age* ; H. Sée, *Les Classes Rurales et le Regime Seigneurial en France au Moyen-Age.*

[12] The pioneer book of N. S. B. Gras, *The Evolution of the English Corn Market* requires special mention, though it does no more than break the ground.

[13] R. R. Betts, 'La Société dans l'Europe centrale et dans l'Europe orientale, *Révue d'Histoire Comparée*, 1948.

[14] XX, Historical Data concerning Merchant's capital; XXXVI, Interest in the Middle Ages; XLVII, The Genesis of Capitalist Ground Rent. The whole volume was compiled from Marx' notes after his death by F. Engels.

[15] The wage-earner, in order to live, is compelled to work for the capitalist; the compulsion on him is economic. The feudal peasant, having his own means to production, has to be compelled by the immediate or ultimate threat of force to hand over his rent to the landlord. This is the reason for the medieval peasant's lack of personal freedom.

[16] The nearest approach to an organised proletariat was the Florentine Ciompi. Their weakness was revealed in the revolt of 1378 when their short-lived achievement of political power collapsed as soon as they were cut off from their allies among the artisans and petty tradesmen. Additionally it was a measure of their immaturity that the big bourgeoisie could so easily isolate them.

[17] See H. Van Werweke, 'Currency Manipulations in the Middle Ages' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 4th Series, XXXI.*

[18] See Marc Bloch, '*Le probleme de l'or au Moyen Age*' — *Annales d'Histoire Economique et Sociale*, 1933; L'or musulman du VII^e au XI^e siecle . . .' *Annales*, 1947, No. 2 by M. Lombard; and 'Monnaies et civilisations . . . *ibid.* 1946, No. 1 by F. Braudel.

[19] It is interesting to note what Mme. Doehaerd, in the admirable work mentioned above, considers to be the phenomena 'qui constituent l'ossature de la vie economique internationale et locale de tous le temps.' They are: 'la question des produits qui font l'objet du commerce . . . celle de leurs centres de provenance ou de production, des places ou ils sont échangés, des centres d'exportation et d'importation, des voies et moyens de transport, des agents d'échange, des methodes d'échange, des moyens monetaires et du credit.' p. 142. It is remarkable that questions of production do not come into the problems of economic life.

[20] Estimate of 15th century wool production in E. Power, *Medieval English Wool Trade*, p. 37.

[21] E. Lipson, *History of the English Woollen and Worsted Industries* (1921) p. 16.

[22] 'Some Economic Evidence of Declining Population in the Later Middle Ages' — *Economic History Review*, 2nd series, II, 3.

[23] See C. Oman, *The Great Revolt of* 1381.

[24] e.g. in two Leicestershire hundreds, 28% of the taxed population were wage workers, excluding market towns and artisans in the villages. A comparison with 19th century Russia is here useful. The rise in wages was due not only to the shortage of labour but to the increase in pure wage-labour as compared with the incidental wage labour of small-holders, since part of their wages consisted of their small-holding, money remuneration could therefore be kept down, while the pure wage labourers' could not.

[25] See Marx, *Capital* I, XXIV, 5; Lenin, *Selected Works* I, 223-5.

[26] Compare the remarks on 15th century Poland by M. Malowist, *IX^e Congres des Sciences Historiques, Rapports, p.* 314.

[27] For both of which there are many good secondary works.

[28] See the first two chapters of F. Antal's *Florentine Painting and Its Social Background* and N. Rodolico's *I Ciompi.*

Evangelicalism and the French Revolution

V. Kiernan

THE RELIGIOUS REVIVAL IN ENGLAND WHICH WAS PART OF THE transformation of 18th into 19th century, was perhaps the most significant that has occurred in Europe in times recent enough for the historian to be able to approach them familiarly. This makes it a useful basis of enquiry into the connections between religious and other social trends. It invites attention also because it recapitulated some features of the earlier, more important, revivals in the 16th century, and may throw a retrospective light on these.

In the form of Wesleyan and Calvinist Methodism, the revival began a little before 1740, in the dawn of the Industrial Revolution. Underlying it through the next hundred years were the complex social shifts brought about by economic change. In the middle of this period there was a sudden acceleration, a broadening of a sectarian cult into something like a national faith. It may be permissible to say that in general, as in this case, religious impulses begin at the lower social levels, in response to changes to which the mass of people are more sensitive, because more directly exposed, than those above them; and that the latter move from hostility to acceptance only when an external shock comes to emphasise the dangers of internal discontent. Jacobinism, which abolished the Christian calendar in France, helped to establish the Victorian Sabbath in England.

The following remarks are concerned with the moment, about 1800, when religious enthusiasm was recognised as a possible support of order and stability. In other words they are mainly concerned with only one, and a negative, aspect of the movement. On this side many of its affinities are with the ' Counter-Reformation type ' of religious revival, that namely of which the social function is to help in preserving an essentially static social order. As a whole this revival is an heir of the Reformation, a descendant of English Puritanism, and like them is associated with the emergence of a new social pattern out of an old one.

But even for an understanding of the conservatism of 1800, the revival must be seen as something ' popular,' originating from the people, like every genuine religious impulse. Wesley, a staunch conservative of High Church leanings, gave his name and imprint, and an organisation, to something he had liberated rather than

created: it created itself, in some ways in spite of him. 'New Birth' teachings embodied, in part and imperfectly, the early efforts of common people to adapt themselves to an altering environment. They were an inchoate mode of social thought, a groping towards a New Birth of society. They had been derided or denounced by those in Church and State who were satisfied with things as they were, and unwilling to recognise that the times were changing. When occasion arose for revivalism to be enlisted by the friends of order, these facts were positively useful. In religion as in politics, an idea which is to disarm discontents must at some time, in some sense, have seemed both to friend and foe an idea of rebellion. We are only held securely by fetters we have helped to forge ourselves; no-one else can tell the exact fit of our wrists and ankles.

Panic inspired by the French Revolution did not and could not of itself conjure up any religious revival. It could at best shake upper-class free-thinkers into a more active persecution of lower-class ones. Even in the good old days Warburton had thought that atheists should be banished.[1] In the frenzy inspired by Jacobinism and the outbreak of war in 1793, when atheism was supposed to have produced Revolution by parthenogenesis, the upper classes underwent a sharp revulsion from their former scepticism. "Most fortunately for the interest of religion and morality, or of their prudential substitutes at least, the name of Jacobin was everywhere associated with that of Atheist or Infidel."[2] Officially, Englishmen "panted for an opportunity to take the lead in restoring erring man to his allegiance to the Heavenly Sovereign."[3] Patriotic drums were beaten, reform was condemned as sedition. Loyalty, conservatism, Christianity, became identical. "Those who are hostile to the British constitution, are almost always equally hostile to the Christian revelation."[4]

But the Established Church, as a whole, was in no position to meet new needs. It had stood still: aristocratic at the top, pauperised at the bottom, worm-eaten with patronage and pluralism, angry and astonished at the collapse of the Catholic Church in France. Among 18,000 Anglican clergymen a severe censor was able by 1799 to detect some hundreds of 'zealous and lively men.'[5] But these obscure parochial stirrings were not enough. Bishop Beilby Porteus of London (with great tact or greater simplicity) observed that "a wicked and profligate clergyman is a monster in nature, of which I will not suppose the existence"; but the "present awful situation of the country," he cried in alarm, demanded much more.[6] Indeed, the very conservatives had ceased to pay much attention to the Church, or at any rate to invest in it; subscriptions to Queen Anne's Bounty (for the augmentation of small livings) came in very sluggishly.[7]

It was not that the argument in favour of religion as indispensable to social order failed to make itself heard. It failed to convince, because it was too utilitarian and rational. In 18th century England,

as in parts of Renaissance Europe before social tensions became explosive, an unchallenged upper class had ceased to feel much need of heaven, had come to rely on use and wont, and to justify itself by common sense, for which religion was little more than another name. Much had been heard in the age of Paley of the ' reasonableness of Christianity.' But a public creed only looks ' reasonable ' (this question is very little affected by the logic of its doctrines in themselves) so long as the prevailing relations between man and man are accepted as reasonable. And when an upper class appeals to common sense, others follow its example. Reason was now divided against itself. Burke, with tremendous passion, appealed to men's good sense ; but so did Thomas Paine.

In Anglican practice, as in a good deal of late mediæval Catholicism, dogma had been supplanted by ethics — ethics as understood by the powers that were — and formal observances ; theology had ebbed away into ' natural religion.' Bishops as well as Unitarians could be regarded as not much better than Socinians or Pelagians. " So ethical, so heathen-like," complained an Evangelical clergyman of the (very rare) sermons preached by most Bishops.[8] While the interests of the Optimates were accepted as equivalent to those of the nation at large, sermons could be strung together from moral platitudes. Within a stable social framework good and evil need no elaborate definition. We all know that the poor must not steal from the rich. When social harmony was disturbed, as after 1789, the weaknesses of ' mere moral preaching,' or what Scotsmen called ' a blether of cold morality,' made themselves felt. Dogmatic religion, by contrast, has the merit of standing above and beyond the realm of political wrangling.

Two conceptions of religion were living in England side by side, and the French Revolution compelled a choice between them. One was of religion as the formulary of an established society, its statement of faith in itself ; the other as a catastrophic conversion of the individual, a miraculous shaking off of secret burdens. One was fixed on this world, the other on the next. From a certain point of view victory for the latter would mean regression, as the resurrection of ancient dogmas by the Reformation had done. In a different sense it would mean advance, at least to the point of recognition that society had changed, and under its old rulers and guides could no longer pretend fully to understand itself or its problems.

For religion to promote social stability it was necessary, now as in Counter-Reformation Europe, that upper and lower classes should find common ground, that they should believe the same things. At any rate a proportion of the upper classes should join heartily in belief, and the rest should make a better pretence of doing so. This could not come about ' reasonably,' since there was no basis of social agreement. It was time for cold logic to give way to warm emotion, morality to mystery — as in the 16th century when social upheaval

urned humanist speculation into Protestant and neo-Catholic dogmatics.

In such an adjustment, very broadly speaking, the poor tacitly recognise the worldly position of the rich, and the rich accept the spiritual position of the poor, while by accepting the religious critique of society they help to prevent this from evolving into a political critique. In the present case, orthodoxy might denounce disbelief and point out its horrid consequences at Paris, but it was not well equipped to say what ought to be believed ; dust lay thick on the Thirty-nine Articles. It could not invent items of faith on the spur of the moment ; whereas in the revivalist movement astir since 1740 these already existed. They had seemed antiquated, not to say barbarous, to the polished mind of before 1789. But what had seemed modern before 1789 was now antediluvian. If high and low were to join in worship, it must be the worship of the poor.

The rich would not accept this solution with any alacrity. " It was of incalculable benefit to the nation," thought an Anglican writer in later years, " that such a power as Methodism existed just at the time when otherwise the revolutionary torrent would have swept away multitudes in its course."[9] Methodism, indeed, was going on its humble way in the 1790s, despite some internal friction after Wesley's death in 1791. So was the new spirit it had helped to kindle in the Old Dissenting bodies, and in the small Evangelical movement within the Church. Yet, modest though these movements were, only from them could salvation come. At the time, conservatives in Church and State very decidedly failed to see matters in this light. They suspected hot-gospellers from plough and loom of nourishing the same ambitions now as in the dreadful, never-forgotten days of the Levellers. As before during the American Revolution, episcopal thunders did not spare the Old Dissenters either : " the most fearful denunciations were published concerning them, as ignorant, factious schismatics, guilty of heresy and treason."[10] Many upper-class converts to the Revival would have to be compelled to come in from the highways and byways ; to be dragooned into belief, if less ungently than by the Inquisition once upon a time in Spain. There would thus be an element in it of the lower orders triumphing over the higher, and enjoying at least a metaphysical conquest.

To bring the respectable round to this point required both hard experience and able advocacy. The distance they had to travel may be seen by comparison of Burke's *Reflections* (1790) with Wilberforce's *Practical View* (1797)[11] — both addressed to the upper classes, and both immediately applauded by them.

Burke undertook to defend the Church with all her wrinkles. He invoked, not a creed, but a dignified clerical corporation, tempering the moral discipline of the ruling class and striking awe into inferiors. Fully admitting that the mass of mankind had no part in the splendid

' partnership ' of his State except as degraded menials, he had to call in religion to ' consecrate ' it.[12] Religion interested him only in relation to the State, and he failed to see that what he was saying really amounted to what the ' infidels ' had been saying (with their 18th century one-sidedness) for a long time — that religion was an invention of those in power to control those out of power.

There is a symbolical touch in the story of Burke on his death-bed reading Wilberforce's new book.[13] It was time for another man to take over his mission. Wilberforce could undertake it because he saw it in different terms. He was as much alive as any wealthy man to the perils threatening property, and he was willing to state his political case bluntly — " to suggest inferior motives to readers, who might be less disposed to listen to considerations of a higher order."[14] But he had been a moderate reformer in politics, and was still a humanitarian, who consented reluctantly to Pitt's policy of war and repression ; he remained always a Tory of the Left. His religion was perfectly genuine : he had been ' converted ' before 1789, though it required the Revolution to make a religious propagandist of him. England was changing before 1789, and in such times of change there are individuals in the upper classes who are as sensitive to the psychological stresses as the lower classes are to the economic, and who likewise turn to religion for support. A man like Wilberforce needed religion also to give him a sense of union with the mass of his fellow-men which he could not achieve in any directer form, especially in the dark years when even agitation against the Slave Trade savoured of sedition, and languished. What was emotionally necessary to him, he could recommend to others as politically necessary. He had no novel ideas ; his mind fused together Wesley's conviction that man's soul was in danger, and Burke's that society was in danger. His book came out, appropriately, at the crisis of the great naval mutinies.

England's distemper, he wrote, " should be considered rather as a moral than a political malady."[15] The root evil is selfishness, wearing diverse shapes in the various walks of life, but at bottom everywhere the same.[16] All ranks being vicious in the same degree (neither Burke nor Robespierre would have admitted this), only Christianity can keep the social fabric from falling to pieces. " Moderating the insolence of power, she renders the inequalities of the social state less galling to the lower orders, whom also she instructs, in their turn, to be diligent, humble, patient " — and so on and so forth.[17] This passage, the kind of stuff that enraged Hazlitt and Cobbett, occurs in one of the two sections of the book that he particularly asked his friend Pitt to read.[18] The other section deals with the essentials of Christian doctrine.

To suppose, as lukewarm ' nominal Christians ' did, that Christianity was no more than religion in general, and religion no more than morality, was " a great and desperate error."[19] He

utlined the ' Gospel scheme ' of salvation — grace, faith, justification — and insisted that these were the true tenets, too long neglected, of he Church of England.[20] Fallen man, corrupt in every fibre, ould be snatched from damnation by nothing except " the sufferings nd atoning death of a crucified Saviour."[21] No other form of eligion, moreover, was " at all suited to make impressions upon the ower orders, by strongly interesting the passions of the human ind."[22] But — and here was a link with the political side of the ase — true or ' vital ' religion could not be simulated, and a Church ystem could not be kept up in this new age by worldlings only bent on ' retaining the common people in subjection."[23]

Thus Wilberforce did not appear to set up religion for the sake f the State : religion made its own infinite demands, and wholesome olitical consequences followed merely as a by-product. Whereas Burke had put the religious horse squarely before the political cart, Wilberforce concealed the horse behind the cart. Or, more properly, e transformed the characters of both. All the gorgeous panoply of Burke's State disappears ; the crown is replaced by the bowler hat, Louis XIV turns into Louis Philippe. This in itself was a sort of dication. It was, in its own way, a *radical* solution that Wilberforce ut forward, for his religion was, in contemporary terms, the despised reed of the Methodists, the hedge-priests, the lower orders.[24] Wesley had begun his mission in the shadow of the Forty-five d of economic unrest. Wilberforce proposed the same remedy to eet a greater crisis.

To bring the ' two nations ' closer together was clearly the most gent task, and nothing stronger could be found to link them than he mystical cable of theology. Evangelicalism did not concern tself with the nicer subtleties of theology (a discipline capable, like mathematics, of aesthetic qualities — but the Revival cared little for Art) ; in so far as it dealt with these matters, it inclined towards Calvinism, towards the Methodism of Whitefield rather than of Wesley. Most of its spokesmen, particularly the laymen, were very moderate Calvinists, quite unlike the furious zealots of Lady Huntingdon's Connexion.[25] Wilberforce, like Wesley, was a practical man, for whom decrees of Absolute Reprobation had little charm ; one of his favourite divines was Baxter. He and his friends kept to the broad highway of Reformation doctrine, wishing to bring serious men of all Protestant denominations together, not to divide them.[26] On one point they did not moderate their zeal : they believed in Hell fire, and Wilberforce himself affirmed his faith in the real and dreadful existence of the Evil One.[27]

Hell burns brightly in times when men's hatred of each other is rancorous and extreme ; it lends a local habitation to the images of fear and cruelty lurking in their souls. Moreover, it is no respecter of persons. ' Vital religion ' had the great merit, in face of egalitarian ideas, of throwing into relief the equality of souls without disturbing

the inequality of ranks. All men were not equally good, as Rousseau had made people think, but they were all equally bad. Fraternity lay in an equal share of Adam's guilt, not of the rights of man. Original sin, therefore, was a dogma of crucial importance. Bishop Porteus, who had an acute sense of "the present awful situation of this country," dwelt on it in his charge to the clergy of 1798-99. "It will not be sufficient to amuse your hearers with ingenious moral essays . . . This will be a feeble and ineffectual effort . . . You must show them to themselves . . . you must convince them that they are frail, corrupt, and fallen creatures" — and so convince them also of "the extreme, the contemptible insignificance of every thing this world has to offer."[28]

Men as individuals are more readily persuaded of their depravity when collectively they are faced by dilemmas that seem insoluble. Conviction was deepened by a dawning consciousness of many social evils; by the despair that in some minds had succeeded to the transcendent hopes of 1789; by social disharmony, for men feel guilty when they hate one another; most palpably, by the long disasters of the wars. An Old Testament feeling was taking root of divine wrath visited on a chosen but erring nation; a nation chosen, that is, to save Europe and civilisation from France. There was an outpouring of mystical and prophetical interpretations of the great events of the day, which seemed to defy human understanding.[29]

Hence the call for a national reformation of manners. "The great mass of the people are going headlong to the devil for their sins; the nation, because of its transgressions, is absolutely verging towards destruction."[30] Implicit in such sweeping judgments was a denial of any peculiar blame attaching to griping landlord or brutal mill-owner. National contrition and expiation were not to be directed along very realistic lines. While war kept reaction in power, much reforming zeal meandered into pettifogging channels like the Society for the Prevention of Vice.[31] Sabbatarianism played a prominent part here, and acquired an irrational, because displaced energy. Sabbath-observance supplied an element of the mystical, akin to the miracles and rituals of the Counter-Reformation; and it was another substitute for equality.[32] If the rich could not be accused of grinding the faces of the poor, they could be accused of Sabbath-breaking. They in turn could find it in their hearts to plead guilty of it, and their critics to accept this as true contrition. When Jane Austen, describing the deplorable Mr. Elliot of "Persuasion," chose to accuse him of travelling on Sunday, she was obeying the Evangelical formula: the spirit of the age had breathed on a corner even of *her* crystal mirror. An article in the *Evangelical Magazine* of 1805 impartially condemns two parallel offences of this kind. A set of Irishmen from the back lanes of London had been brought before the Lord Mayor for attending a Sunday night *hop* (or dance), and resisting arrest. On the same day

ne Marquis of A—— gave a splendid dinner, followed by dramatic ecitations and an evening party at which the beautiful Lady H—— ang " and obligingly exhibited all her wonted fascinations of ttitude." These vipers in high life were not, indeed, arrested.

Along with theology and the Sabbath, the Bible was being xtracted from its 18th century cobwebs, an achievement largely lue to that remarkable organisation, the British and Foreign Bible ociety.

In May 1803 war broke out again between England and France. n the same month Wilberforce and others were consulted about the lan of a new Bible society, and heartily approved.[33] In the winter f that year Napoleon was reviewing his troops at Boulogne. On March 3, 1804, a public meeting at the London Tavern agreed on he inauguration of the British and Foreign Bible Society. In May ord Teignmouth, whose name was suggested by Porteus, accepted he Presidency.[34] Clearly these dates have a meaning. England aced its greatest ordeal since 1588, and popular discontent was still ife. Certainly friends of order who helped to sponsor the Scriptures oped that they would have a sound effect on the public mind. opies were soon reported to have reached the navy, where not long nce ' The Age of Reason ' had been circulating.[35]

On the other hand, the plan itself arose quite naturally out of a ed felt by ' serious ' clergymen in Wales for a better supply of elsh Bibles, which were in widespread demand, and it was a Baptist, e Rev. J. Hughes, who started the idea of broadening the scheme cover all Britain and the world.[36] The true revivalists were ried forward by a real and potent emotion, by the inspiration f a task which, to everyone's surprise, was able to bring together hurchmen, Dissenters, and even Quakers, people hitherto denizens f an almost unknown world of their own.[37]

Success was not very rapid until about 1809, when local Auxiliary ssociations began to take shape on a permanent basis.[38] In these, ll the motives that went into the Revival could co-operate ; as is ell illustrated by the 1814 Report of the Auxiliary Society of outhwark,[39] an area infested in 1792 by a Society of the Friends of he People.[40] This body had twelve subsidiaries, with 650 active nembers, and was subsidised by Jews and Catholics as well as rotestants, though it felt obliged to decline subscriptions from abandoned females." Collateral agencies were supplying bread, uel, and clothing, and keeping up " a constant investigation of the tate of the poor " ; and a point was made of drawing the poor themelves into the work of circulating Bibles, and so of allowing them to e " partakers in the privileges of the Rich."

Defence of the plenary inspiration of Scripture gave the sects common task and spirit, such as the Evangelicals were anxious o promote. Adam Clarke dealt exhaustively with the vexed question f whether the Ark was big enough to accommodate all its passengers

and their provisions for a year, and was able (following Bishop Wilkins) to allow his wolves a liberal diet of one sheep per head every six days.[41] Scriptural redoubts and entrenchments thus erected were to prove in various ways an obstacle to progress in the next decades. Charles Darwin was to find the ubiquitous Moses lying in wait for him, as he had not lain in wait for Erasmus Darwin. It struck Blanco White that the theological atmosphere in England was vastly less free and progressive than in the German universities, and he was disgusted by the ranting tone of the Bible Society set.[42]

But doctrine was not enough. One weakness of Burke's philosophy had been that it stood still : it offered only self-complacency to the rich, resignation to the poor. Wilberforce offered them a measure of honest, practical co-operation, even if the immediate objects he set forth were far removed from the nation's most pressing needs. He was able to bestir himself, and make others do the same, and in the heat and bustle of a useful life he confirmed the unity of his politico-moral convictions. A Christian was a pilgrim, " travelling on business through a strange country."[43] None the less he *had* business, and that was to be useful in his generation ; " not to meditate, but to act."[44] Wilberforce enlisted those who, like himself, feared upheaval but felt that it could not be averted by police methods only, or longed for something more idealistic than the existing order.

Wesley, who in early days had been suspected of Romish tendencies, was often compared with Loyola. And Loyola had preached the philosophy of action against the Spanish quietists of his day. The practical movements Wilberforce helped to organise are reminiscent of phases (some of the *best*, not the worst phases) of Counter-Reformation history, and the resemblance is not accidental : in both cases a social order incapable of radical change, but suffering from acute tensions, was seeking moral renovation or outlets for idealism. The crusade against the Slave Trade is strikingly like the agitation in 16th century Spain against colonial misrule.[45] One leading feature of the Revival, affecting all the sects, was the growth of interest in missionary work, and the Evangelicals, like the Jesuits from their first days, threw themselves with ardour into promoting missions. These activities, thousands of miles away from home, recaptured for the body politic its good conscience, its moral faith in itself, in spite of sedition trials, famine wages, and French victories.

Another main task of the Counter-Reformation had been to stimulate the flow of charity, and thus soften the harshness of an unjust society. Wilberforce understood like Wesley, or Loyola long before, that professions of Christian brotherhood must be supported by brotherly aid. He called for " a vigorous principle of enlarged and active charity,"[46] set the example himself, and tried to induce Ministers to add public assistance to police coercion.[47] Before long England was priding itself on a flow of charitable funds on a scale never before approached.

About 1800, it has been said, Evangelicalism crystallised from a tendency into a party.[48] Morals and politics, that is, were now brought into alliance by the Clapham Sect.[49] Circumstances helped its progress. The character of the wars was changing; middle-of-the-road men could be heard again[50]; anti-Slave Trade agitation recovered, and in 1807 came Wilberforce's triumph, the abolition. A more respectable tone crept into public life; Pitt's last hours were reported as edifying, and statesmen like Harrowby and Perceval were quite 'serious.' All Protestant bodies except the Unitarians, tainted with Jacobinism, were expanding. 'Society' began to look very different from what it was when Wilberforce first entered the House of Commons and found only one openly religious man in it.[51] By 1813 things had gone so far that the Duke of Kent found himself patron of the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews. Moreover, the Church was now worth subsidising. In 1804 Parliament gave it the first of a series of grants, and from about 1808 private benefactions to Queen Anne's Bounty began to rise sharply.[52] The new funds strengthened the Evangelical wing.

Meanwhile the party of the unreformed and unrepentant High Church looked on in disgust; a fact heartening to the godly, because it reassured them that they were working for God and not for Mammon. In 1810 the Bible Society was severely criticised by Dr. Wordsworth, chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had to be answered by Teignmouth himself.[53] With Hibernian exuberance the Master of the College of Kilkenny, refusing to be "stunned with the holy declamation" of "spiritual Jacobins," depicted the Society as a "formidable confederation," a "strange and portentous comet" hanging over the world, ominous of "convulsion and dissolution." To invite peasants to read Scripture themselves, unguided, was to overthrow, in the end, all respect for law and order.[54]

Such indignation was not unreal. The Bible, after all, without careful commentary, cannot be relied on to promote undiluted conservatism. And the strength of the Revival's appeal lay precisely in its omission to identify itself too obviously with sublunary dispensations. True, Wilberforce was ready to endorse measures of repression in the 1790s, and again between 1815 and 1820. Methodism likewise backed the government against radicalism after 1815.[55] A celebrated definition of religion is called to mind by De Quincey's curious statement that his opium-eating habits were shared by Wilberforce, Dean Milner, Erskine, and Sidmouth's brother, as well as by Coleridge and by a mass of pauperised work-people in Lancashire.[56] Yet as a rule the Evangelicals went on a path of their own. Simeon of Cambridge, paying his respects to the British Constitution, was not being very fulsome when he observed that the condition of Britain was very different "from that of the

Roman Empire in the time of Nero."[57] In the midst of the wars the Evangelical Magazine devoted immense space to overseas mission reports, but scarcely any to war propaganda in any direct form. It could even give Napoleon credit for his religious toleration,[58] a policy which — as amongst Protestants — it supported at home.[59]

Religious revival was in truth a double-edged weapon. The dogma of original sin and the depravity of human nature, for instance, has had in all its periods of influence a dual significance, fitting it to stand at the conflux of dual forces. It contains a censure on the powers that be, including the absentee prelates and selfish aristocrats of 1800, as well as a dissuasive from popular rebellion. Luther and Calvin, two of its foremost champions, struggled from the first on two fronts, against papalism and against Anabaptism.

There were as many shades in the Revival as social groups affected by it, stretching all the way from the house where Samuel Butler's Theobald Pontifex was growing up through Clapham Common to the rebel artisans of Tanner's Lane. After about 1800 there was a strong admixture of pretence. But for various classes it had an urgent meaning, and for the nation as a whole it helped to express the mood of a people moving forward, planlessly and painfully, into the uncharted future of the machine-age. How extreme was the moral tension of the age is measured also by the greatness of English poetry then. Squalid and humdrum as it looked by comparison, the Industrial Revolution was a greater innovation in world history than the French Revolution, and moved on a more shadowy road. Moving forward with it, the English looked back for reassurance to the God of their forefathers, the God of Abraham and Isaac, of Cromwell and Bunyan. But it was the mood, however confused, of an expanding and not a stagnating economy. Economic advance, underlying the eddies of politics and ideas, kept revivalism from belonging fundamentally to the type of 16th century Spanish religion.

Hazlitt and Hunt, Sydney Smith and Bentham, as well as Kilkenny and Barchester, lamented the 'torrent of fanaticism' deluging the country. But the Radicals stood alone, quarrelling among themselves, and in any case they wanted reform without revolution; and the uprooted masses could not borrow a programme from the Revolution that established capitalism in France. In England the advance was from an earlier to a more mature stage of capitalism; politically the way forward was towards 1832. Evangelicalism brought together the developing sections of the middle classes, gave them an independant outlook, relieved their fears of the more elemental forms of mass unrest, showed how a respectable working-class could be led by a respectable middle-class. In fact it prepared the ground for 19th century English Liberalism. The dream of a national reformation of morals was followed, after the war years, by the Benthamite renovation of Church and State.

NOTES

[1] W. Warburton, *The Alliance between Church and State*, 4th ed. (London 1766), 304.

[2] S. T. Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection* (1825), Bohn Library 1913, 253.

[3] Rev. A. O'Callaghan, *The Bible Society against the Church and State*, (London 1817), 4.

[4] Beilby Porteus, Bishop of London, *A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of London, in the years* 1798 *and* 1799, (London 1799),15.

[5] Rev. D. Simpson, *A Plea for Religion and the Sacred Writings* (1797), 2nd ed. 1799, reissued with notes, etc., by Rev. John Gaulter, (Liverpool 1812, 318 N.) Rev. J. H. Overton, *The Evangelical Revival in the Eighteenth Century*, (London 1886) p. 85, describes the Evangelical clergy as by 1800 'a very numerous and influential body.' Rev. T. Timpson, *British Ecclesiastical History, including the Religion of the Druids*, 2nd ed. (London 1847) p. 518, quotes an estimate of 500 Evangelical clergymen in 1795.

[6] Porteus, op. cit., 31. In February 1799 Porteus began a Lent series of lectures on Scripture at St. John's Church (*Evangel. Mag.* VII 130).

[7] e.g. Porteus, 4-7. [8] Simpson, 136-141. [9] Overton, 141.

[10] Timpson, 449. Cp R. W. Dale, *History of English Congregationalism*, (London 1907) 563-580. On the parallel state of affairs in Scotland see H. W. Meikle, *Scotland and the French Revolution*, (Glasgow 1912) chap. X,

[11] W. Wilberforce, *A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians in the higher and middle classes in this country, contrasted with real Christianity.*

[12] Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution*, Everyman Library 1910, 57 and 94.

[13] R. Coupland, *Wilberforce*, (Oxford 1923) 244.

[14] Wilberforce, op. cit., 2nd ed. (London 1797) 422.

[15] Ib. 415. [16] Ib. 399.

[17] Ib. 40 ; cp Hannah More, *Christian Morals*, (London 1813), Vol. I, 155.

[18] Coupland, 243-44. The two sections were chap. VI, and chap. IV section vi.

[19] Wilberforce, 248. [20] Ib. 62-3. [21] Ib. chap. II, and 125.

[22] Ib. 409. [23] Ib. 407-8.

[24] Cp Hazlitt, *On the Causes of Methodism* : 'Vital Christianity is no other than at attempt to lower all religion to the level of the lowest of the capacities of the people.' Cp also Hazlitt's picture of Wilberforce, in the essay on him in *The Spirit of the Age* (1825), as a 'Mr. Facing-both-ways.' Coupland, 422 ff., points out Hazlitt's unfairness in some respects.

[25] On Lady Huntingdon's Connection see Timpson, Bk. VIII chap. xvii. The *Evangelical Magazine*, IV, 152 ff., has a description of it in 1796. On the Calvinistic controversy,' which had attained a most venomous intensity, see Overton, 191-99, and R. Southey, *The Life of Wesley*, 2nd ed. (London 1820) chap. XXV, and Notes XXIX-XXXI.

[26] See e.g. A. Clarke, *The Doctrine of Salvation by Faith Proved*, 1815, 2nd ed. (London 1819) ; cp Overton, chap. X, *The Doctrines of the Revival*, and Southey, chap. XX, *Wesley's Doctrines and Opinions.*

[27] Wilberforce, 42-4.

[28] *A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of London, in the years* 1798 *and* 1799, (London 1799) 31 and 22-25. Cp C. Simeon, *The Danger of Neglecting the Great Sacrifice*, (an Assize sermon), (Cambridge 1797), and *Horae Homileticae*, No. 922, *Vileness and Impotency of the Natural Man.*

[29] e.g. Simpson, 192 ff., 236 ff., and Editor's note, 235 ; H. More, Vol. 1, 47 ; Porteus, 42 ; *Evangelical Magazine*, IV, 1796, 98 ff., 303.

[30] Simpson, 147 ; cp 313.

[31] The Society was formed in 1802, replacing an earlier one of 1787.

[32] *Evangel. Mag.*, XIII, 1805, 237-8.

[33] Rev. J. Owen, *The History of the Origin and First Ten Years of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, Vol. 1, (London 1816) 17-18.

[34] Ib. 67-9.

[35] *Evangel. Mag.*, X, XI, 1813, 390-1. There was also a ' Naval and Military Bible Society,' a forerunner of which had existed from 1780.

[36] Owen, 2 ff., 17.

[37] Ib. 37-44, describing the inaugural meeting and the author's own feelings on that occasion. Quakers had already been active against the Slave Trade. A body of ' Evangelical Friends ' formed itself within their Society (Timpson, 545-6).

[38] Owen, 172, 423-4.

[39] *The Formation, Progress, and Effects of Bible Associations as detailed by the Committee of the Southwark Auxiliary Bible Society*, (London 1814).

[40] H. W. C. Davis, *The Age of Grey and Peel*, (Oxford 1929), 78.

[41] Cited in Simpson, 266 ff., Note by Editor.

[42] See J. H. Thom, *The Life of the Rev. Joseph Blanco White*, (London 1845). " No country in the world suffers more from false notions of religion than England " (letter to J. S. Mill, 1835 ; Vol. II, 137-8). " Even the most bigoted Germans do not venture to support Theories which in England are still regarded as the Basis of Christianity " (1838 ; Vol. III, 16).

[43] Wilberforce, 300.

[44] Ib. 344.

[45] See L. Hanke, *The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America*, (Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1949).

[46] Wilberforce, 337 ; cp. H. More, Vol. 1, 190.

[47] e.g. in 1800 ; see Coupland, 264. Cp the charitable appeal in the *Evangel. Mag.*, VIII, 1800, 540.

[48] Halévy, *Histoire du Peuple Anglais au XIXe siécle* Vol. I (Paris 1913), 410.

[49] On the Clapham Sect see Coupland, 248 ff. ; Halévy, 412.

[50] The *Edinburgh Review* was founded in 1802.

[51] C. Oman, *Britain against Napoleon*, (London 1943), 321. Pitt, who had shocked serious men by duelling, " highly interested the religious world " by the edifying accounts published of his last hours. (Simpson, 405-6, Note by Editor). Men like Byron, of course, in less responsible positions than Pitt's, were inclined to lag behind. See a review in the *Evangel. Mag.*, XIII, 1805, 131-2, of ' The Fashionable World displayed,' a severe satire on aristocratic morals by the Rev. John Owen.

[52] This becomes clear from a study of the annual detail of benefactions given in C. Hodgson, *An Account of the Augmentation of Small Livings . . . .*, (London 1826).

[52] Owen, 469 ff.

[54] Rev. A. O'Callaghan, *The Bible against the Church and State*, (London 1817) 5-9, 44, and 59.

[55] Davis, 143. Southey (II. 565) was hoping about this time that Methodism might still find its true place as an " auxiliary institution " of the Church, like a confraternity within the Roman Catholic Church.

[56] *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, Preface of 1821.

[57] C. Simeon, *Horae Homileticae* (skeleton sermons on the Scriptures), Vol. IX, 1820, No. 945, ' Duty to Civil Governors.' In No. 997, ' The Benefit Arising from Attention to the Poor,' Simeon neglects to point out any political benefit. He thinks sickness the only grave trial of the poor. " The poor in a time of health are happy; because their minds and habits are fitted to their state."

[58] *Evangel. Mag.*, XIII, 1805, 89 ; cp X, 1802, 36-7.

[59] *Evangel. Mag.*, XIX, 1811, 276 ff. ; XX, 1812, 356-62. On the Act of 1812 see Halévy, 404-9. Note the argument against intolerance in the *New Theological Repository*, Vol. 1, (Liverpool 1800) 35-48.

The Machine Breakers

E. J. Hobsbawm

IT IS PERHAPS TIME TO RECONSIDER THE PROBLEM OF MACHINE-WRECKING in the early industrial history of Britain and other countries. About this form of early working-class struggle misconceptions are still widely held, even by specialist historians. Thus an excellent work, published in 1950, can still describe Luddism simply as a "pointless, frenzied, industrial jacquerie," and an eminent authority, who has contributed more than most to our knowledge of it, passes over the endemic rioting of the 18th century with the suggestion that it was the overflow of excitement and high spirits.[1] Such misconceptions are, I think, due to the persistence of views about the introduction of machinery elaborated in the early 19th century, and of views about labour and trade union history formulated in the late 19th century, chiefly by the Webbs and their Fabian followers. Perhaps we should distinguish views and assumptions. In much of the discussion of machine-breaking one can still detect the assumption of 19th century middle-class economic apologists, that the workers must be taught not to run their heads against economic truth, however unpalatable; of Fabians and Liberals, that strong-arm methods in labour action are less effective than peaceful negotiation; of both, that the early labour movement did not know what it was doing, but merely reacted, blindly and gropingly, to the pressure of misery, as animals in the laboratory react to electric currents. The unconscious views of most students may be summed up as follows: the triumph of mechanisation was inevitable. We can understand, and sympathise with the long rear-guard action which all but a minority of favoured workers fought against the new system; but we must accept its pointlessness and its inevitable defeat.

The tacit assumptions are wholly debatable. In the conscious views there is obviously a good deal of truth. Both, however, obscure a good deal of history. Thus they make impossible any real study of the methods of working-class struggle in the pre-industrial period. Yet such a study is badly needed. A very cursory glance at the labour movement of the 18th and early 19th century shows how dangerous it is to project the picture of desperate revolt and retreat, so familiar from 1815-1848, too far into the past. Within their limits,—and they were, intellectually and organisationally very narrow—the movements of the long economic boom

which ended with the Napoleonic wars, were neither negligible nor wholly unsuccessful. Much of this success has been obscured by subsequent defeats : the strong organisation of the West of England woollen industry lapsed completely, not to revive until the rise of general unions during the first world war ; the craft societies of Belgian woollen workers, strong enough to win virtual collective agreements in the 1760s, lapsed after 1790 and until the early 1900s trade unionism was for practical purposes dead.[2]

Yet there is really no excuse for overlooking the power of these early movements, at any rate in Britain ; and unless we realise that the basis of power lay in machine-wrecking, rioting and the destruction of property in general (or, in modern terms, sabotage and direct action), we shall not make sense of them.

To most non-specialists, the terms ' machine-wrecker ' and Luddite are interchangeable. This is only natural, for the outbreaks of 1811-13, and of other years in this period, attracted more public attention than any others, and were believed to require more military force for their suppression. Mr. Darvall[3] has done well to remind us that the 12,000 troops deployed against the Luddites greatly exceeded in size the army which Wellington took into the Peninsula in 1808. Yet one's natural preoccupation with the Luddites tends to confuse the discussion of machine-breaking in general, which begins, as a serious phenomenon (if it can be properly said to have a beginning) sometime in the 17th century and continues until roughly 1830. Indeed, the series of farm-labourers' revolts which the Hammonds baptised the ' last labourers' rising ' in 1830 was essentially a major offensive against farm-machinery, though it incidentally destroyed a fair amount of manufacturing equipment too.[4] In the first place, Luddism, treated as a single phenomenon for administrative purposes, covered several distinct types of machine-breaking, which for the most part existed independently of each other, both before and after. In the second place the rapid defeat of Luddism led to a widespread belief that machine-breaking never succeeeded.

Let us consider the first point. There are at least two types of machine-breaking, quite apart from the wrecking incidental to ordinary riots against high prices or other causes of discontent — for instance some of the destruction in Lancashire in 1811, and Wiltshire in 1826.[5] The first sort implies no special hostility to machines as such, but is, under certain conditions, a normal means of putting pressure on employers or putters-out. As has been justly noted the Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Derbyshire Luddites " were using attacks upon machinery, whether new or old, as a means of coercing their employers into granting them concessions with regard to wages and other matters."[6] This sort of wrecking was a traditional and established part of industrial conflict in the period of the domestic and manufacturing system, and the early

stages of factory and mine. It was not directed only against machines, but also against raw material, finished goods, or even the private property of employers, depending on what sort of damage these were most sensitive to. Thus in three months of agitation in 1802 the Wiltshire shearmen burned hay-ricks, barns and kennels of unpopular clothiers, cut down their trees, destroyed loads of cloth, as well as attacking and destroying their mills.[7]

The prevalence of this 'collective bargaining by riot' is well-attested. Thus— to take merely the West of England textile trades — clothiers complained to Parliament in 1718 and 1724 that weavers "threatened to pull down their houses and burn their work unless they would agree with their terms."[8] The disputes of 1726-7 were fought, in Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire, as well as in Devon by weavers "breaking into the houses (of masters and blacklegs), spoiling of wool, and cutting and destroying the pieces in the looms and the utensils of the trade."[9] They ended in something like a collective contract. The great textile workers' riot at Melksham in 1738 began with workers "cut(ting) all the chains in the looms belonging to Mr. Coulthurst . . . on account of his lowering of the Prices"[10]; and three years later anxious employers in the same area were writing to London for protection against the men's demands that no outsiders should be employed, on pain of destroying wool.[11] And so on, throughout the century.

Again, where coal-miners had reached the point of aiming their demands against employers of labour, they used the technique of wrecking. (For the most part, of course, miners' riots were still directed against high food-prices, and the profiteers believed to be responsible for them). Thus in the Northumberland coal-field the burning of pit-head machinery was part of the great riots of the 1740s, which won the men a sizeable wage-rise.[12] Again, machines were smashed, and coal set on fire in the riots of 1765, which won the miners the freedom to choose their employers at the end of the annual contract. [13] Acts of Parliament against the burning of pits were passed at intervals through the later part of the century.[14] As late as 1831 the strikers at Bedlington (Durham) wrecked winding-gear.[15]

The history of the frame-breaking in the East Midlands hosiery trade is too well-known to need re-telling.[16] Certainly the wrecking of machines was the most important weapon used in the famous riots of 1778 (the ancestors of Luddism), which were essentially part of a movement to resist wage-reductions.

In none of these cases — and others might be mentioned — was there any question of hostility to machines as such. Wrecking was simply a technique of trade unionism in the period before, and during the early phases of, the Industrial Revolution. (The fact that organised unions hardly as yet existed in the trades concerned, does not greatly affect the argument. Nor does the fact that, with

the coming of the Industrial Revolution, wrecking acquired new functions). It was more useful, when intermittent pressure had to be put on masters, than when constant pressure had to be maintained : when wages and conditions changed suddenly, as among textile workers, or when annual contracts came up for simultaneous renewal, as among miners and seamen, rather than where, say, entry into the market had to be steadily restricted. It might be used by all sorts of people, from independent small producers, through the intermediate forms so typical of the domestic system of production, to more or less fully-fledged wage-workers. Yet it was, in the main, concerned with disputes which arose from the typical social relationship of capitalist production, that between employing entrepreneurs and men who depended, directly or indirectly, on the sale of their labour-power to them ; though this relationship existed as yet in primitive forms, and was entangled with the relationships of small independent production. It is worth noting that riot and wrecking of this type seem more frequent in 18th century Britain, with its ' bourgeois ' Revolution behind it, than in 18th century France.[17] Certainly the movements of our weavers and miners are very different from the superficially trade-union like activities of journeymen's accociations in many more old-fashioned continental areas.[18]

The value of this technique was obvious, both as a means of putting pressure on employers, and of ensuring the essential solidarity of the workers.

The first point is admirably put in a letter from the Town Clerk of Nottingham in 1814.[19] The framework knitters, he reported, were now striking against the firm of J. and George Ray. Since this firm employed mainly men who owned their own looms, they were vulnerable to a simple withdrawal of work. Most of the firms, however, rented out the looms to knitters " and through them acquire entire control of their workmen. Perhaps the most effectual manner in which the combination could coerce them was their former manner of carrying on war by destroying their frames." In a domestic system of industry, where small groups of men, or single men, work scattered in numerous villages and cottages, it is, in any case, not easy to conceive of any other method which could guarantee an effective stoppage. Moreover, against comparatively small local employers, destruction of property — or the constant threat of destruction — would be pretty effective. Where, as in the cloth industry, both the raw material and the finished article were expensive, the destruction of wool or cloth might well be preferable to that of looms.[20] But in semi-rural industries even the burning of the employer's ricks, barns and houses might seriously affect his profit-and-loss account.

But the technique had another advantage. The habit of solidarity, which is the foundation of effective trade unionism, takes time to learn — even where, as in coal-mines, it suggests itself naturally.

It takes even longer to become part of the unquestioned ethical code of the working-class. The fact that scattered framework knitters in the East Midlands could organise effective strikes against employing firms, for instance, argues a high level of 'trade union morale'; higher than could normally be expected at that period of industrialisation. Moreover, among badly-paid men and women without strike-funds, the danger of blacklegging is always acute. Machine-wrecking was one of the methods of counter-acting these weaknesses. So long as the winding gear of a Northumbrian pit was broken, or the blast-furnace of a Welsh iron-works out, there was at least a temporary guarantee that the plant could not be operated.[21] This was only one method, and not everywhere applicable. But the whole complex of activities which 18th and early 19th century administrators called 'Riot,' achieved the same purpose. Everyone is familiar with the bands of militants or strikers from one works or locality, touring the whole region, calling out villages, workshops and factories by a mixture of appeals and force (though few workers needed much persuasion in the early stages of the fight).[22] Even much later mass demonstrations and meetings were an essential part of a labour dispute — not only to overawe the employers, but to keep the men together and in good heart. The periodic riots of the North-eastern seamen, at the times when hiring contracts were fixed, are a good example[23]; strikes of modern dockers another.[24] Clearly the Luddite technique was well-adapted to this stage of industrial warfare. If British weavers in the 18th century (or American lumber-men in the 20th) were a proverbially riotous body of men, there were sound technical reasons why they should be so.

> On this point too we have some confirmation from a modern trade union leader who, as a child, lived through the transition of a woollen industry from domestic to factory system. "It is necessary to remember" writes Rinaldo Rigola[25] "that in those pre-socialist times the working-class was a crowd, not an army. Enlightened, orderly, bureaucratic strikes were impossible. (R. is an extreme conservative among union leaders—E. J. H.). The workers could only fight by means of demonstrations, shouting, cheering and cat-calling, intimidation and violence. Luddism and sabotage, even though not elevated into doctrines, had nevertheless to form part of the methods of struggle."

We must now turn to the second sort of wrecking, which is generally regarded as the expression of working-class hostility to the new machines of the industrial revolution, especially labour-saving ones. There can, of course, be no doubt of the great feeling of opposition to new machines; a well-founded sentiment, in the opinion of no less an authority than the great Ricardo.[26] Yet three observations ought to be made. First, this hostility was neither so indiscriminate nor so specific as has often been assumed. Second, with local or sectional exceptions, it was surprisingly weak in practice. Lastly, it was by no means confined to workers, but was shared by the great mass of public opinion, including many manufacturers.

(i) The first point will be clear, if we consider the problem as it

faced the worker himself. He was concerned, not with technical progress in the abstract, but with the practical twin problems of preventing unemployment and maintaining the customary standard of life, which included non-monetary factors such as freedom and dignity, as well as wages. It was thus not to the machine as such that he objected, but to any threat to these — above all to the whole change in the social relations of production which threatened him. Whether this threat came from the machine, or from elsewhere, depended on circumstances. The Spitalfields weavers rioted against machines by which " one man can do as much . . . as near twenty without them " in 1675 ; against wearers of printed calicoes in 1719 ; against immigrants working below the rate in 1736 ; and they wrecked looms against rate-cutting in the 1760s.[27] : but the strategic objective of these movements was the same. Around 1800 the western weavers and shearmen were simultaneously in action ; the former organised against the flooding of the labour market by extra workers, the latter against machines.[28] Yet their object, the control of the labour market, was the same. Conversely, where the change did not disadvantage the workers absolutely, we find no special hostility to machines. Among printers, the adoption of power-presses after 1815 seems to have caused little trouble. It was the later revolution in type-setting which, since it threatened wholesale down-grading, provoked a fight.[29] Between the early 18th and the mid-19th century mechanisation and new devices greatly increased the productivity of the coal-miner ; for instance the introduction of shot-firing. However, as they left the position of the hewer untouched, we hear of no important movement to resist technical change, though pitmen were proverbially ultra-conservative and riotous. Restriction of output operated by workers under private enterprise is a different matter altogether. It can and does occur in wholly unmechanised industries — for instance the building trade ; nor does it depend on overt movements, organisations or outbreaks.

In some cases, indeed, the resistance to the machine was quite consciously resistance to the machine in the hands of the capitalist. The Lancashire machine-wreckers of 1778-80 distinguished clearly between spinning-jennies of 24 spindles or less, which they spared, and larger ones, suitable only for use in factories, which they destroyed.[30] No doubt in Britain, which was more familiar with social relations of production which anticipated those of industrial capitalism this kind of behaviour is less unexpected than elsewhere. Nor should we read too much into it. The men of 1760 were still a good way from understanding the nature of the economic system they were about to face. Nevertheless, it is clear that theirs was not a simple fight against technical progress as such.

Nor is there, for the most part, any fundamental difference in the attitude of workers towards machines, taken as an isolated

problem, in the earlier and later phases of industrialism. It is true that in most industries the object of preventing the introduction of undesirable machines has given way, with the coming of full mechanisation, to the plan to 'capture' them for workers enjoying trade union standards and conditions; while taking all practicable steps to minimise technological unemployment. This policy seems to have been adopted patchily after the 1840s[31] and during the Great Depression, more generally after the middle 1890s.[32] Nevertheless there are plenty of examples of the straightforward opposition to machines which threaten to create unemployment or to downgrade labour even to-day.[33] In the normal working of a private enterprise economy the reasons which led workers to distrust new machines in the 1810s remain persuasive in the 1950s.

(ii) The argument so far may help to explain why, after all, the resistance to machines was so small. The fact is not widely recognised, for the mythology of the pioneer age of industrialism, which men like Baines and Samuel Smiles reflected, has magnified the riots which actually occurred. The men of Manchester liked to think of themselves not only as monuments of enterprise and economic wisdom, but also — a more difficult task — as heroes. Wadsworth and Mann have reduced the riots of 18th century Lancashire to more modest proportions.[34] In fact we have record of only a few really widespread wrecking movements such as that of the farm-labourers, which probably destroyed most threshing-machines in the areas affected,[35] the specialised campaigns of the small body of shearmen in Britain and elsewhere,[36] and perhaps the riots against power-looms in 1826.[37] The Lancashire wreckings of 1778-80 and 1811 were confined to limited areas and limited numbers of mills. (The great East Midland movements of 1811-12 were not, as we have seen, directed against new machinery at all). This is not only due to the fact that some mechanisation was regarded as harmless. As has been pointed out[38] most machines tended to be introduced in times of rising prosperity, when employment was improving and opposition, not fully mobilised, could be for a time dissipated. By the time distress recurred — the strategic moment for opposing the new devices was past. New workers serving them had already been recruited, the old hand operatives stood outside, capable only of random destruction of their competitor, no longer of imposing themselves on the machine. (Unless, of course, they were lucky enough to possess a specialised market which was not affected by machine-production, as hand-bootmakers and tailors did in the 1870s and 80s). One reason why the wrecking of the shearmen was so much more persistent and serious than that of others was that these highly skilled and organised key-men retained much control over the labour market, even after partial mechanisation.[39]

(iii) The mythology of the pioneer industrialists has also obscured the overwhelming sympathy for machine-wreckers in all parts of

the population. In Nottinghamshire not a single Luddite was denounced, though plenty of small masters must have known perfectly well who broke their frames.[40] In Wiltshire — where the cloth-finishing middlemen and small masters were known to sympathise with the shearmen[41] — the real terrorists of 1802 could not be discovered.[42] The merchants and woollen manufacturers of Rossendale themselves passed resolutions against power-looms some years before the men smashed them.[43] During the 1830 labourers' rising the Clerk to the Magistrates in Hindon, Wiltshire, reported that " where the mobs have not destroyed the machinery, the farmers have exposed the same for the purpose of being destroyed,"[44] and Lord Melbourne had to send a sharply-worded circular to Magistrates who had " in many instances recommended the Discontinuance of the Employment of Machines used for thrashing out Corn and for other Purposes." " Machines," he argued " are as much entitled to the protection of the Law as any other Description of Property."[45]

Nor is this surprising. The fully developed capitalist entrepreneurs formed a small minority, even among those whose position was technically that of profit-makers. The small shop-keeper or local master did not want an economy of limitless expansion, accumulation and technical revolution, the savage jungle pursuit which doomed the weak to bankruptcy and wage-earning status. His ideal was the secular dream of all ' little men,' which has found periodic expression in Leveller, Jeffersonian or Jacobin radicalism, a small-scale society of modest property-owners and comfortably-off wage-earners, without great distinctions of wealth of power ; though doubtless in its quiet way, getting wealthier and more comfortable all the time. It was an unrealisable ideal, never more so than in the most rapidly evolving of societies. Let us remember, however, that those to whom it appealed in early 19th century Europe made up the majority of the population, and outside such industries as cotton, of the employing class.[46] But even the genuine capitalist entrepreneur could be in two minds about machines. The belief that he must inevitably favour technical progress as a matter of self-interest has no foundation, even if the experience of French capitalism, and of later British capitalism were not available. Quite apart from the possibility of making more money without machines than with them (in sheltered markets etc.), only rarely were new machines immediate and obvious paying propositions.

There is, in the history of any technical device, a ' threshold of profit ' which is crossed rather late — the larger the capital that has to be sunk in a machine, the later. Hence perhaps the proverbial lack of business success of inventors, who sink their and other people's money in their projects while they are still inevitably imperfect and by no means clearly superior to their non-mechanised rivals.[47] Of course the free enterprise economy could overcome

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these obstacles. What has been described as the "vast secular boom" of 1775-1875 created situations, here and there, which provided entrepreneurs in some industries — for instance, cotton — with the impetus to leap across the 'threshold.'[48] The very mechanism of capital accumulation in a society undergoing revolution provided others. So long as competition operated, the technical advances of the pioneer section were spread over quite a wide field. Yet we must not forget that the pioneers were minorities. Most capitalists took the new machine in the first instance not as an offensive weapon, to win bigger profits, but as a defensive one, to protect themselves against the bankruptcy which threatened the laggard competitor. We are not surprised to find E. C. Tufnell in 1834 accusing "many of the masters in the cotton trade . . . of the disgraceful behaviour of instigating workmen to turn out against those manufacturers who were the first to enlarge their mules."[49] Petty producer and run-of-the-mill entrepreneur were in an ambiguous position, but without the independent power to change it. They might dislike the need for new machines, either because they disrupted their way of life, or because, on any rational accounting, they were not really good business at the moment. In any case they saw them as strengthening the position of the large modernised entrepreneur, the main rival. Working-class revolts against machines gave such men their chance; often they took it. One may reasonably agree with the student of French machine-wrecking who observes that "sometimes the detailed study of a local incident reveals the Luddite movement less as an agitation of workmen, than as an aspect of competition between the backward and the progressive shop-owner or manufacturer."[50]

If the innovating entrepreneur had the bulk of public opinion against him, how did he succeed in imposing himself? By means of the State. It has been well remarked that in Britain the Revolution of 1640-60 marks a turning-point in the State's attitude towards machinery. After 1660 the traditional hostility to devices which take the bread out of the mouths of honest men, gave way to the encouragement of profit-making enterprise, at whatever social cost.[51] This is one of the facts which justifies us in regarding the 17th century Revolution as the real political beginning of modern British capitalism. Throughout the subsequent period the central State apparatus tended to be, if not ahead of public opinion on economic matters, then at least more willing to consider the claims of the fully capitalist entrepreneur — except, of course, where these clashed with older, and bigger vested interests. The Squire Westerns in some counties might still toast the shadow of a vanished feudal hierarchy in an unchanging society: there was no significant trace of feudal policy in the Whig governments, at any rate after 1688. London sympathy was to prove of inestimable value to the new industrialists when, in the last third of the century, their meteoric rise began. On issues

of agrarian, commercial or financial policy Lancashire might be in conflict with London, but not on the fundamental supremacy of the profit-making employer. It was the unreformed Parliament in its most ferociously conservative period, which introduced full laissez-faire into the relations between employer and worker. Classical free enterprise economics dominated the debates. Nor did London hesitate to rap its more oldfashioned and sentimental local representatives over the knuckles if they failed " to maintain and uphold the rights of property of every description, against violence and agression."[52]

Yet, until the latter part of the 18th century the support of the State for the innovating entrepreneur was not unqualified. The political system of Britain from 1660 to 1832 was designed to serve manufacturers only in so far as they bought their way into the ring of vested interests of an older type — commercially-minded landlords, merchants, financiers, nabobs etc. At best they could only hope for a share of the pork-barrel proportionate to their pressure, and in the early 18th century the ' modern ' manufacturers were as yet only occasional groups of provincials. Hence at times a certain neutrality of the State in labour matters, at any rate until after the middle of the 18th century.[53] Western clothiers complained bitterly that the majority of local J.P.s was biased against them.[54] The attitude of the national government in the weavers' riots of 1726-7 contrasts strikingly with that of the Home Office from the 1790s on. London regretted that the local clothiers needlessly antagonised the men by arresting rioters ; pooh-poohed suggestions that these were seditious ; suggested that both parties get together amicably, so that a proper petition might be framed and Parliament could take action.[55] When this was done, Parliament sanctioned a collective agreement which gave the men very much what they wanted, at the cost of a perfunctory ' apology for past riots.'[56] Again, the frequency of ad hoc legislation in the 18th century[57] tends to show that no systematic, consistent and general attempt was made to enforce it. As the century progressed, the voice of the manufacturer increasingly became the voice of government in these matters ; but earlier it was still possible for the men occasionally to fight sections of the masters on more or less fair terms.

We now come to the last and most complex problem : how effective was machine-breaking ? It is, I think, fair to claim that collective bargaining by riot was at least as effective as any other means of bringing trade union pressure, and probably *more* effective than any other means available before the era of national trade unions to such groups as weavers, seamen and coal-miners. That is not to claim much. Men who did not enjoy the natural protection of small numbers and scarce apprenticed skills, which might be safeguarded by restricted entry to the market and firm hiring monopolies, were in any case bound normally to be on the defensive. Their success

nerefore should be measured by their ability to keep conditions
able—e.g. stable wage-rates — against the perpetual and well-
dvertised desire of masters to reduce them to starvation level.[58]
This required an unremitting and effective fight. It may be argued
nat stability on paper was constantly undermined by the slow inflation
f the 18th century, which steadily rigged the game against wage-
arners[59] ; but it would be asking too much of 18th century activities
o cope with that. Within their limits, one can hardly deny that
pitalfields silk-weavers benefited from their riots.[60] The disputes
f keelmen, sailors and miners in the North East, of which we have
ecord, ended as often as not, with victory or acceptable compromise.
Moreover, whatever happened in individual engagements, riot and
nachine-wrecking provided the workers with valuable reserves at all
mes. The 18th century master was constantly aware that an
ntolerable demand would produce, not a temporary loss of profits,
ut the destruction of capital equipment. In 1829 a leading colliery
nanager was asked by the Lords' Committee, whether a reduction
f wages in the Tyne and Wearside coal mines could " be effected
ithout danger to the tranquillity of the district, or risking the
estruction of all the mines, with all the machinery, and the valuable
ock vested in them." He thought not.[61] Inevitably, the employer
ared with such hazards, paused before he provoked them, for fear
at " his property and perhaps his life (might) be endangered
ereby."[62] " Far more masters than one might expect," Sir
hn Clapham noted with unjustified surprise, supported the
ention of the Spitalfields Silkweavers' Acts, for under them, they
rgued " the district lived in a state of quietude and repose."[63]

Could riot and machine-breaking, however, hold up the advance
f technical progress ? Patently it could not hold up the triumph of
ndustrial capitalism as a whole. On a smaller scale, however, it was
y no means the hopelessly ineffective weapon that it has been made
ut to be. Thus fear of the Norwich weavers is supposed to have
revented the introduction of machines there.[64] The Luddism of
he Wiltshire shearmen in 1802 certainly postponed the spread of
nechanisation ; a petition of 1816 notes that " in time of War there
as no giggs nor Frames at Trowbridge but sad to relate it is now
ncreasin Every Day."[65] Paradoxically enough, the wrecking of the
elpless farm-labourers in 1830 seems to have been the most effective
f all. Though the wage-concessions were soon lost, the threshing
nachines did not return on anything like the old scale.[66] How much
f such successes was due to the men, how much to the latent or
assive Luddism of the employers themselves, we cannot, however,
etermine. Nevertheless, whatever the truth of the matter, the
nitiative came from the men, and to that extent they can claim an
nportant share in any such successes.

NOTES

[1] J. H. Plumb, *England in the Eighteenth Century*, 150 ; T. S. Ashton, *The Industrial Revolution*, 154.

[2] L. Dechesne, *L'Avènement du Régime Syndical à Verviers* (Paris, 1908) 51-64 and *passim.*

[3] F. O. Darvall, *Popular Disturbance and Public Order in Regency England* (London 1934), 1.

[4] e.g. woollen and silk-making machines in Wiltshire, paper-making machines in Buckinghamshire, iron-making machines, in Berkshire. (Public Record Office, Home Office Papers, HO 13/57, pp. 68-9, 107, 177 ; Assizes 25/21 *passim*). J. L. and B. Hammond, *The Village Labourer* (various editions) is the most accessible account. See also two unpublished theses : N. Gash, *The Rural Unrest in England in* 1830 (Oxford Examination Schools) and Alice Colson, *The Revolt of the Hampshire Agricultural Labourers* (London University Library).

[5] For discussion of high-price rioting, T. S. Ashton and J. Sykes, *The Coal Industry of the 18th Century* (Manchester 1929), chap. VIII, A. P. Wadsworth and J. de L. Mann, *The Cotton Trade and Industrial Lancashire* (Manchester 1931), 355 ff.

[6] Darvall, chap. VIII *passim.*

[7] Bonner and Middleton's Bristol Journal, 31-7-1802. Some of these were due to ordinary labour disputes, some to opposition to new machines. See J. L. and B. Hammond, *The Skilled Labourer*, for an account of the movement, A. Aspinall (ed.), *The Early English Trade Unions* (London 1949), 41-69 for some of the documents.

[8] House of Commons Journals, xviii, 715 (1718) ; xx, 268 (1724).

[9] House of Commons Journals, xx, 598-9 (1726) ; Salisbury Assize Records qu. in Wiltshire Times 25-1-1919 (Wiltshire Notes & Queries).

[10] Gentleman's Magazine, 1738, 658.

[11] Public Record Office, State Papers Domestic Geo. 2, 1741, 56 : 82-3.

[12] E. Welbourne, *The Miners' Unions of Northumberland and Durham* (Cambridge, 1923), 21.

[13] Ashton and Sykes, 89-91.

[14] 10 Geo. 2, c.32, 17 Geo. 2, c.40, 24 Geo. 2, c.57, 31 Geo 2, c.42 (E. R. Turner, The English Coal Industry in the 17th and 18th centuries, *Amer. Hist. Rev.* XXVII p. 14). Turner seems to have neglected 13 Geo. 2, c.21, 9 Geo. 3, c.29, 39 and 40 Geo. 3, c.77, 56 Geo. 3, c.125 which are also directed against wrecking in mines. (*Burn's Justice of the Peace*, ed. Chitty, 1837 edn., vol. III, 643 ff.).

[15] Welbourne, 31.

[16] W. Felkin, *A History of the Machine-wrought Hosiery and Lace Manufactures* (London 1867) is the main authority.

[17] For the French mines cf. M. Rouff, *Les mines de charbon en France au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris 1922).

[18] E. M. Saint-Léon, *Le Compagnonnage* (Paris 1901), I, chap. 5.

[19] Aspinall, 175.

[20] The men of Bolton were alleged in 1826 to have planned the destruction of all the cotton-yarn ready packed for export, as well as of machines. (Public Record Office, Home Office Papers HO 40/19, Fletcher to Hobhouse 20 April 1826).

[21] Cf. the discussion of these problems in E. Pouget, *Le Sabotage* (Paris n.d.) 45 ff.

[22] e.g. the Welsh ironworkers in 1816 (*The Times*, 26 Oct. 1816), the general strike of 1842 (F. Peel, *The Risings of the Luddites, Chartists and Plugdrawers*, Heckmondwike 1888, 341-7), and the German miners in 1889 (P. Grebe, Bismarcks Sturz u.d. Bergarbeiterstreik vom Mai 1889, *Hist. Ztschr.* CLVII, 91).

[23] Aspinall, 196 : " I cannot help thinking that the morning meetings and roll-callings at present are the *bond* of union."

[24] H. L. Smith and V. Nash, *The Story of the Dockers' Strike* (London 1889), *passim.*

[25] R. Rigola, *Rinaldo Rigola e il Movimento Operaio nel Biellese* (Bari 1930), 19. R. reports no actual wrecking by weavers, only by hatters.

[26] See chapter on " Machinery " in his *Principles.* On this, inserted only into the 3d edition, see Sraffa and Dobb, *Works and Correspondence of David Ricardo,* (Cambridge 1951) I, p. lvii-lx.

[27] M. D. George, *London Life in the 18th Century* (London 1925) 187-8, 180.

[28] *Parl. Papers* 1802, Report fr. Committee on Woollen Clothiers' Petition, 247, 249, 254-5. *Rules and Articles of . . . the Woollen-Cloth Weavers' Society . . .* 1802 (British Mus. 906.k.14(1)).

[29] E. Howe and H. Waite : *The London Compositor* (London 1948) 226-33.

[30] Wadsworth and Mann, 499-500.

[31] S. and B. Webb, *Industrial Democracy* (London 1898), chap. VIII : New Processes and Machinery.

[32] For policy-change of compositors cf. Howe and Waite ; engineers, J. B. Jefferys, *The Story of the Engineers* (London 1945) 142-3, 156-7 ; tin-plate workers, J. H. Jones, *The Tinplate Industry* (London 1914), 183-4, chap. IX.

[33] J. Lofts, *The Printing Trades* (New York 1942) for the long fight of American compositors against the technical revolution in the past 15 years.

[34] Op. cit. 412. See also the detailed analysis of the fate of Hargreaves, 476 ff.

[35] *Sel. Ctee. on Agriculture,* 1833, 64 estimates — doubtless with some exaggeration — that only 1 in 100 of the threshing machines existing before 1830 were now in use in Wilts. and Berks.

[36] On foreign shearmen's agitation, F. R. Manuel, The Luddite Movement in France, *Journ. Mod. Hist.* 1938, 180 ff. ; id., L'Introduction des Machines en France et les Ouvriers, *Rev. d'Hist. Mod.* N.S. XVIII, 212-5. Actual Luddism in France seems to have been virtually confined to shearmen, with less success than in Britain, though Luddite intentions were sometimes expressed by others. See the documents in G. and H. Bourgin, *Le Régime de l'Industrie en France de 1814 à 1830* (Paris 1912-41), 3 vols.

[37] Hammonds, Skilled Labourer, 127.

[38] Manuel, *J. Mod. H.* 187, Darvall, *passim.* See also the note in Tufnell, *Character, Objects and Effects of Trade Unions* (1834), 17 on the reluctance of the men actually working machines to join in the strike against them. But T. admits that they did, threatened or persuaded by their unemployed mates.

[39] The shearmen (croppers) raised the nap on the finished cloth and shaved it off with heavy iron shears. They had to be both very strong and very skilful.

[40] Darvall, 207.

[41] Aspinall, 57-8.

[42] Thomas Helliker, executed as such in 1803 is generally held to have been innocent.

[43] G. H. Tupling, *Economic History of Rossendale* (Manchester 1927), 214.

[44] M.S. Correspondence of M. Cobb, clerk to the Justices at Salisbury, in library of Wiltshire Archæol. & Nat. Hist. Soc., Devizes : 26 Nov. 1830.

[45] Printed Circular 8 Dec. 1830. This is referred to in Hammonds, *Village Labourer* (Guild Books edn.) II, 71-2.

[46] See the brilliant analysis of the " democratic petty-bourgeois " in Marx' Address to the Central Council of the Communist League, *Sel. Works of Marx & Engels,* II, 160-1.

[47] The phrase " Threshold of profit " is S. G. Gilfillan's (Invention as a Factor in Economic History, *Supp. to Journ. Econ. Hist.,* Dec. 1945).

[48] They were helped by the cheapness of the new machines. A western clothier installed jennies with 70-90 spindles for £9 apiece in 1894. Hence the possibility of piecemeal mechanisation.

[49] Tufnell, 18.

[50] Manuel, *J. Mod. H.*, 186.

[51] E. Lipson, *Econ. Hist. of England* (4th edn.) II, p. cxxxv-vi, III, p. 300, 313, 324-7. Sir John Clapham, *Concise Econ. Hist. of Britain*, 301, rightly notes that " extra streak of hardness that seems to enter public life in the Restoration Age."

[52] See Note 45 above.

[53] For the " revolutionary change " in this period, S. and B. Webb, *Hist. of Trade Unionism* (1894) 44 ff. But parliamentary proceedings may give the wrong impression. The normal course of events was that laissez-faire progressed quietly, contrary legislation falling into obsolescence, unless a specially active or effective campaign by the workers occurred. Cf. the repeal of the wage-clauses in the Statute of Artificers in 1813 (W. Smart, *Econ. Annals of the 19th Century*, 1801-20, 368).

[54] Philalethes, *The Case as it now stands between the Clothiers, Weavers and other Manufacturers with regard to the late Riot, in the County of Wilts*, London, 1739 (Cambridge Univ. Lib., Acton d. 25.1005), 7. At any rate as late as 17 Geo. 3, c.55 the hatters secured an Act forbidding any master hatter to sit on the bench in a dispute concerning them — which is more than farm-workers could achieve.

[55] Public Record Office : State Papers Domestic Geo. I, 63 : 72, 82, 93-4. 64 : 1-6, 9-10 (esp. 2-4).

[56] Journals of the House of Commons, xx, 747.

[57] *Burns' Justice of the Peace*, ed. cit., III, 643 ff., V, 485 ff., 552 ff., gives a gruesome picture of this mass of un-coordinated piecemeal legislation.

[58] W. Sombart, *Der Moderne Kapitalismus*, I, ii, 803 for a bibliography of these ; K. Marx, *Capital* I (1938 edn.) 259-63. " *The Case as it now stands* . . . . " (Note 54 above) 29, 41, gives typical arguments.

[59] E. J. Hamilton, The Profit Inflation and the Industrial Revolution 1751-1800, *Q. Journ. Econ.*, 56 (1942), 256.

[60] Hammonds, *Skilled Labourer*. M. D. George's observation, op. cit. 190 that the rise in weaving prices under the Acts was not comparable with that in other trades during the period, may be true. More significant is the drastic collapse of prices after the repeal of the Acts (ibid, 374).

[61] Hammonds, *Skilled Labourer*, 26.

[62] William Stark on the reasons why machinery was not adopted in the Norwich worsted trade, and wage-reductions were resisted. (Handloom Weavers' Commission, 1838 Ass. Commrs. Report II).

[63] J. H. Clapham, The Spitalfields Acts, 1773-1824, *Econ. Journ.* XXVI, 463, 464.

[64] Hammonds, *Skilled Labourer*, 142. J. H. Clapham, The Transference of the Worsted Industry from Norfolk to the West Riding, *Econ. Journ.* XX, discusses the question in greater detail.

[65] Hammonds, ibid, 188.

[66] Clutterbuck, *The Agriculture of Berkshire* (London & Oxford 1861), 41-2.

ast Wishes

Theodor Mommsen

A Codicil to the will of Mommsen, the great historian of Rome, ho died in 1904, *has recently been published in the German monthly* iie Wandlung, (1948, *p.* 69), *the Dutch classical monthly* Hermeneus 2,5 ; *January* 1951), *and the* Bulletino dell' Istituto di diritto mano (53-54 [1948] *p.* 345-6).

It has not, to the Editor's knowledge, yet appeared in English.

I request my family after my death to prevent as far as possible e publication of detailed biographies, and in particular not to hand er any papers for this purpose.

Despite outward successes my life has fallen short of its fulfilment. xternal accidents placed me among historians and classical scholars, though my training, and also, I suppose, my talent, was not sufficient r these two disciplines. The painful feeling of the inadequacy of y achievement, of seeming to be more than I was, has never left e in life and is neither to be veiled nor brought to light in a biography.

There is a further point : I have never had political position and olitical influence, nor aimed at it. But in my inmost self, and I lieve with what is best in me, I have always been an *animal lticum*, and wished to be a citizen. That is not possible in our tion ; even the best among us never rises above doing his duty in e ranks and treating political authority like a fetish (*politischen tischismus*). This rift between my inner self and the people to hom I belong has firmly and consistently determined me to appear little as possible as a person before the German public, for which ave no respect.

I desire that after my death too, the public shall not concern itself th my person. Let my books be read as long as they may last : at I have been or ought to have been, is no concern of the public.

After my death my letters and other papers are to be handed my sons, Karl and Ernst, to be sorted, a task in which they will, they see fit, consult my wife and consider her wishes. Since it s not my custom to throw out letters received, by far the greatest rt are to be destroyed at once. But they may keep for themselves at is suitable, provided always that publication is ruled out. hey may also hand over to a public institute anything that may be itable, with the proviso that for the next thirty years the papers main under lock and key but may then be used like other documents. ereby the contrary provisions of clause 13 of the Will are cancelled.

ringsdorff, 2 September, 1899. THEODOR MOMMSEN.

Our Contributors

Since few of our readers will be cognisant of all our contributors, we append a brief notice of each.

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THEODOR MOMMSEN was the great historian of Rome, who died in 1904.

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